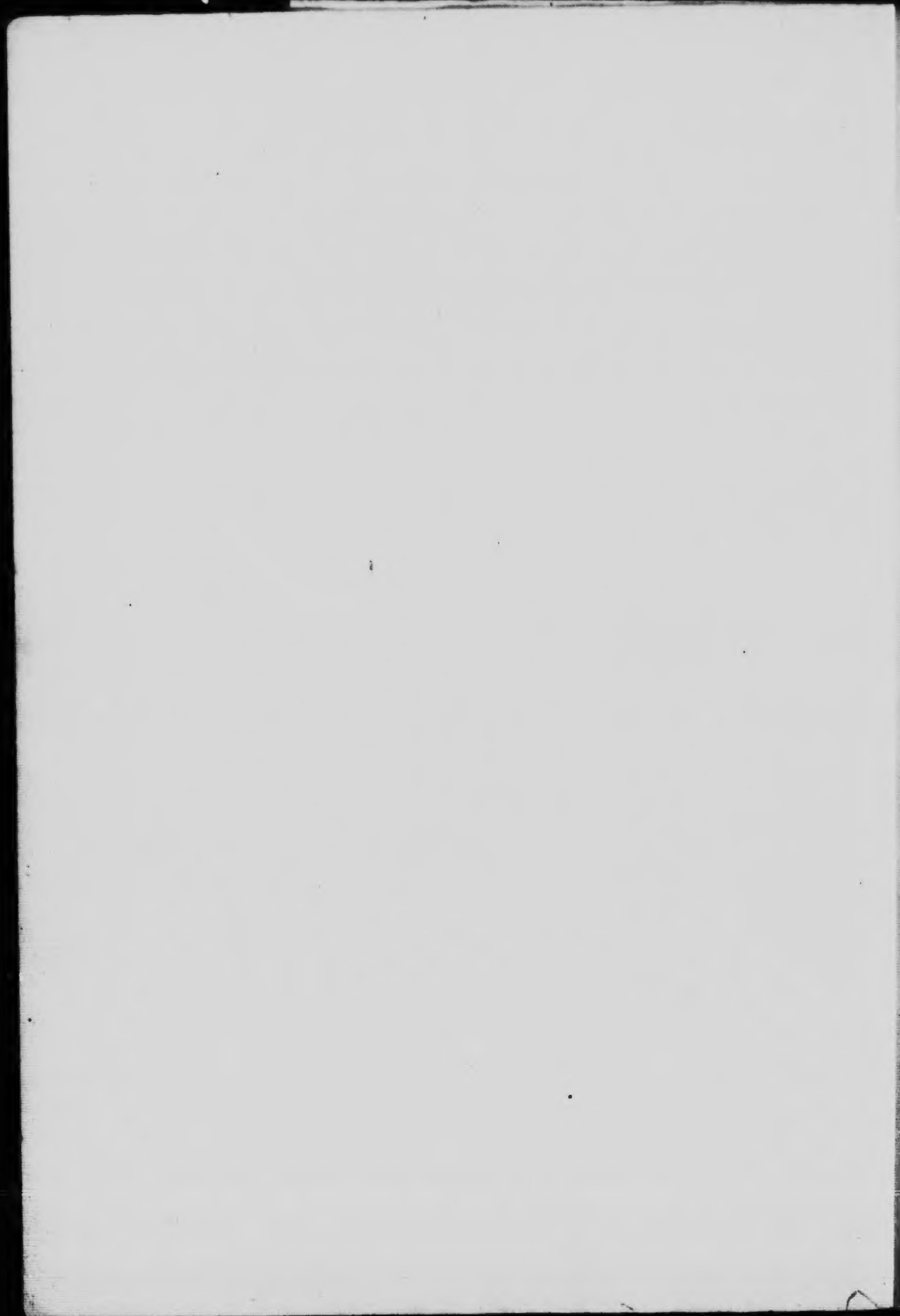
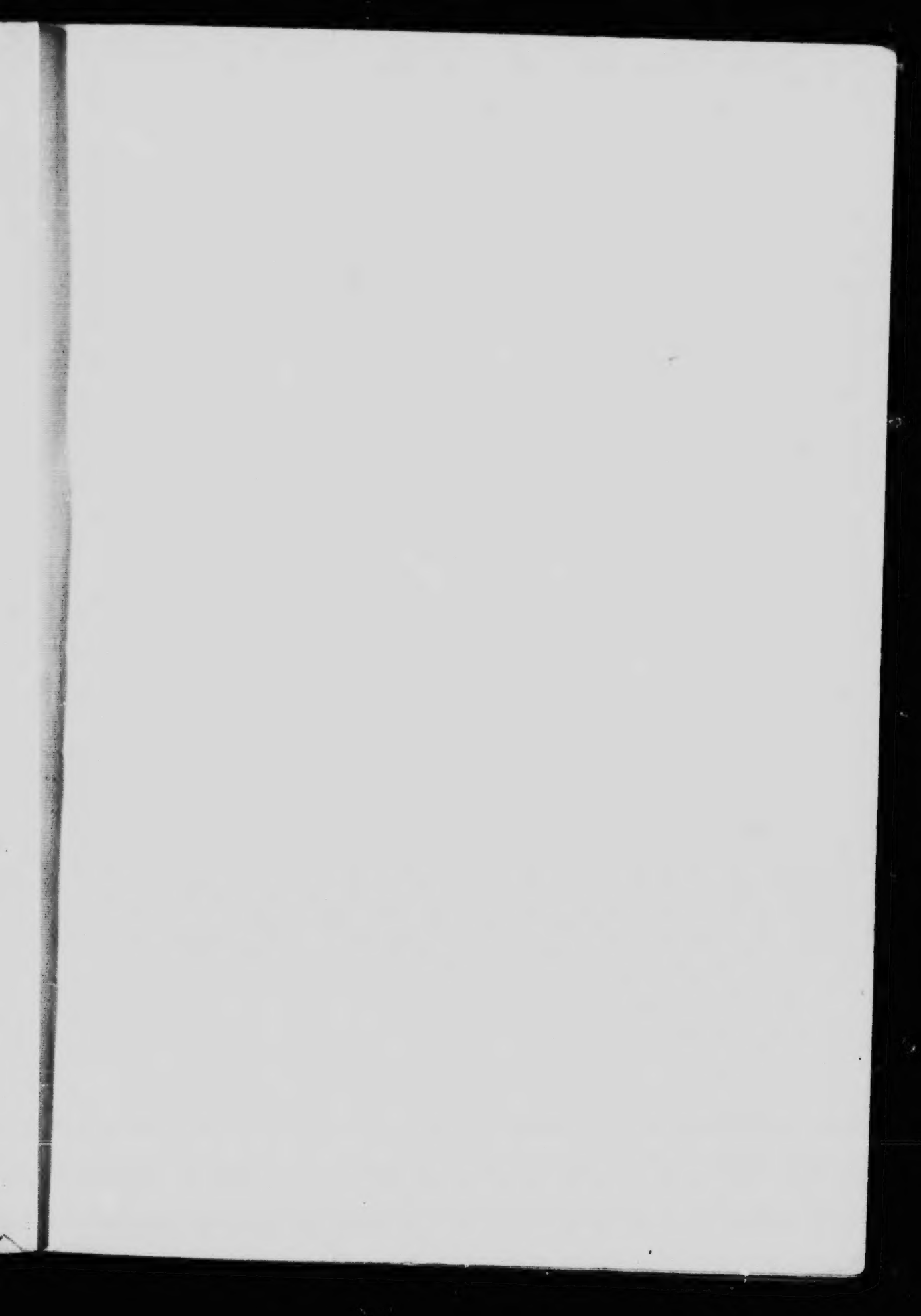


THE
ALEXANDRA
READERS

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1900
Penny







EDWARD VII
KING OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND AND OF THE BRITISH DOMINIONS
BEYOND THE SEAS

THE ALEXANDRA READERS

SECOND READER

BY

W. A. McINTYRE, B.A., LL.D.

PRINCIPAL, NORMAL SCHOOL, WINNIPEG

JOHN DEARNESS, M.A.

VICE-PRINCIPAL, NORMAL SCHOOL, LONDON

AND

JOHN C. SAUL, M.A.

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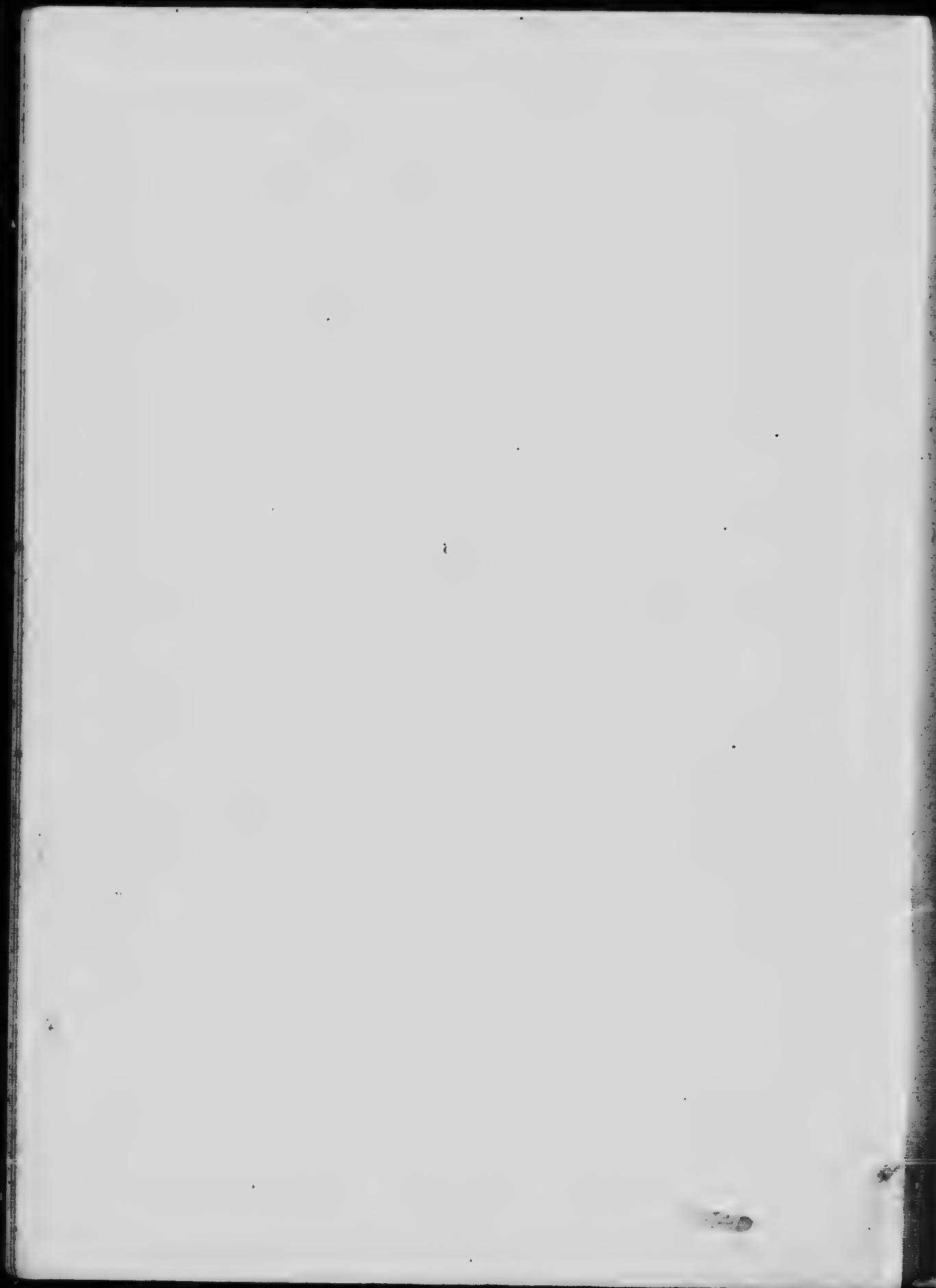
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SECOND READER

WE THANK THEE

For flowers that bloom about our feet;
For tender grass, so fresh, so sweet;
For song of bird and hum of bee;
For all things fair we hear or see, —
 Father in heaven, we thank thee!

For blue of stream and blue of sky;
For pleasant shade of branches high;
For fragrant air and cooling breeze;
For beauty of the blooming trees, —
 Father in heaven, we thank thee!

For mother-love and father-care;
For brother strong and sister fair;
For love at home and school each day;
For guidance, lest we go astray, —
 Father in heaven, we thank thee!

For thy dear, everlasting arms,
That bear us o'er all ill and harms;
For blessed words of long ago,
That help us now thy will to know,—
Father in heaven, we thank thee!

THE SOLDIER'S HORSE

A soldier was walking along the street one day, when he suddenly stopped and rushed across the street to a horse standing at the other side with an empty cab.

"I know him, I know him; he's my own old Valiant, my dear old fellow."

The poor horse seemed to know the hand and voice, for he laid his ears back and pushed his nose against the soldier.

The cabman came up just then and wondered what the soldier was doing with his horse.

The soldier had his hand in his pocket and was saying: "Yes, you shall have it, if it costs the last copper, you dear old Valiant."

He looked at the money, — “It isn’t much, but it’s enough for a feed of oats, and I’ll treat him to it, that I will.”

“Let me have the nose-bag, Mr. Cabman.” The soldier soon came back with a feed of grain. “Now, off with the bridle and let old Valiant have my treat. Be good to him, for he’s a fine old fellow. I am coming round to his stable sometimes to see him.”

The boys that stood near cried “Hurrah!” and the cabman shook hands with the kind-hearted soldier.

MY SHADOW

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with
me,

And what can be the use of him is more than I
can see.

He is very, very like me from the heels up to the
head;

And I see him jump before me, when I jump into
my bed.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to
play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of
way.
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you
can see;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow
sticks to me!



One morning, very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every
buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-
head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast
asleep in bed.

—ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON. (By permission.)

THE PAGE AND THE KING

One day, King Frederick rang the bell to call his page to do some duty. He rang again, but no one came. Stepping into the room where the page should be, he found him fast asleep on a sofa, and a letter by his side.

The king took the letter and read it. It contained the thanks of a mother to her son for sending her so much of his wages to support her, and also her prayer that God would bless him and help him to do his duty well. Softly the king stepped back into his room, took a roll of money and put it into the page's pocket with the letter.

Again he rang the bell, so loudly that the page awoke and quickly came to him.

"You sleep soundly, boy," said the king.

The page did not know what reply to make. Feeling the weight in his pocket, he took it out and saw that it was a roll of money. Looking at the king, he burst into tears without saying a word.

"What is the matter?" asked the king.
"What has happened to you?"

"Ah, sir," said he, "I know not how this money came into my pocket. I did not take it."

"My lad," said the king, "God can send us good even in our sleep. You may give that money to your mother and tell her that I shall not forget either her or you."

ONE, TWO, THREE

It was an old, old, old, old lady,
And a boy who was half-past three;
And the way that they played together
Was beautiful to see.

She couldn't go running and jumping,
And the boy, no more could he,
For he was a thin little fellow,
With a thin little twisted knee.

They sat in the yellow sunlight,
Out under the maple tree;
And the game that they played, I'll tell you,
Just as it was told to me.



It was Hide-and-Go-Seek they were playing,
Though you'd never have known it to be,
With an old, old, old, old lady
And a boy with a twisted knee.

The boy would bend his face down
On his one little sound right knee,
And he'd guess where she was hiding
In guesses One, Two, Three.

"You are in the china closet!"
He would cry, and laugh with glee.

It wasn't the china closet ;
But he still had Two and Three.

" You are up in Papa's big bedroom
In the chest with the queer old key ! "
And she said, " You are warm and warmer,
But you're not quite right," said she.

" It can't be the little cupboard
Where Mamma's things used to be,
So it must be in the clothes-press, Gran'ma,"
And he found her with his Three.

Then she covered her face with her fingers,
That were wrinkled and white and wee,
And she guessed where the boy was hiding
With a One, and a Two, and a Three.

And they never stirred from their places
Right under the maple tree —
This old, old, old, old lady
And the boy with the lame little knee,
This dear, dear, dear, dear lady
And the boy that was half-past three.

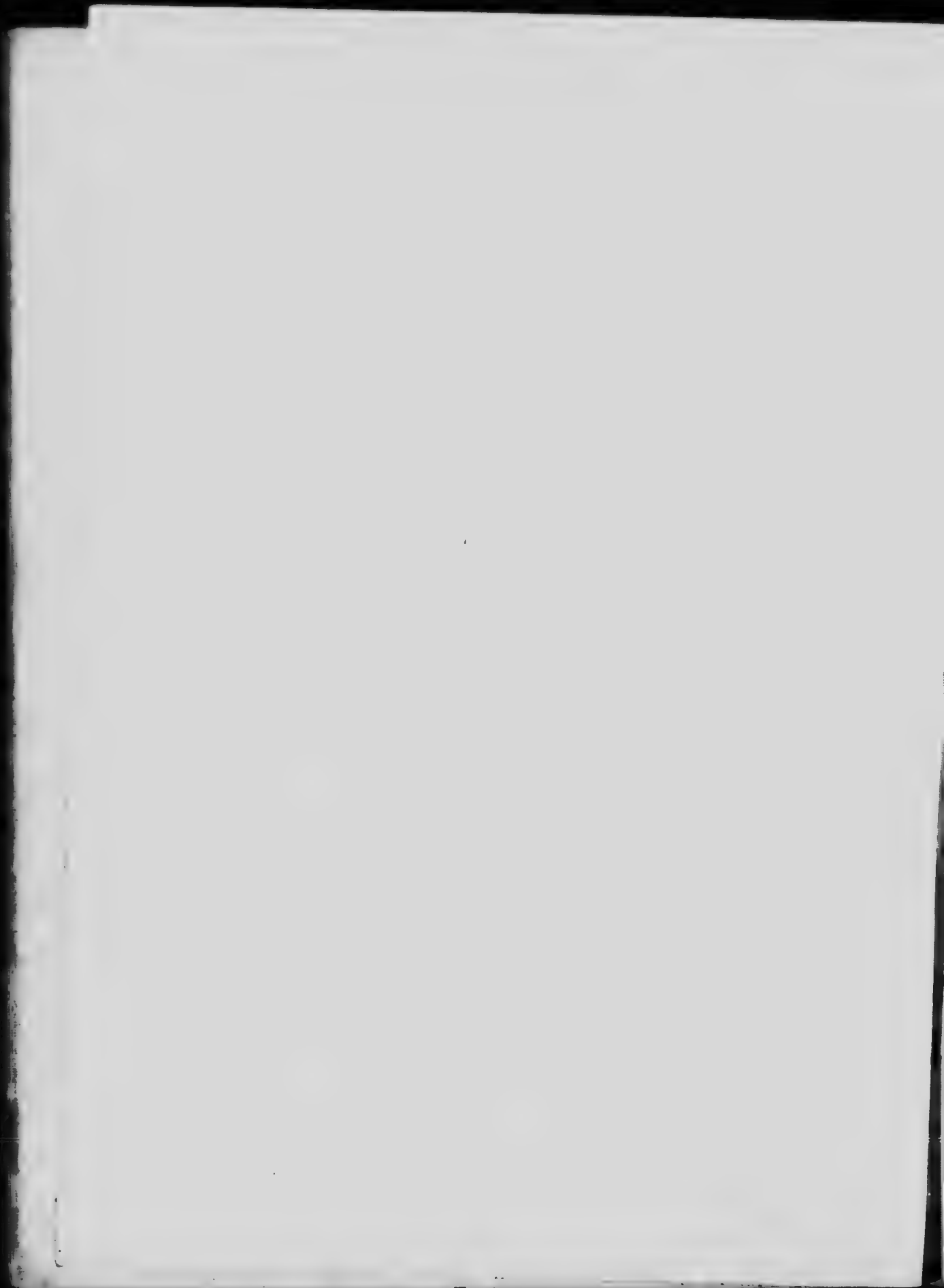
— HENRY CUYLER BUNNER.

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From painting by A. J. Kiley

DIVIDED AFFECTION



THE LAND OF STORY-BOOKS

At evening, when the lamp is lit,
Around the fire my parents sit;
They sit at home, and talk and sing,
And do not play at anything.

Now, with my little gun I crawl
All in the dark along the wall,
And follow round the forest track
Away behind the sofa-back.

There, in the night, where none can spy,
All in my hunter's camp I lie,
And play at books that I have read
Till it is time to go to bed.

These are the hills, these are the woods,
These are my starry solitudes;
And there the river by whose brink
The roaring lions come to drink.

I see the others far away
As if in fire-lit camp they lay,
And I, like to an Indian scout,
Around their party prowled about.

So when my nurse comes in for me,
Home I return across the sea,
And go to bed with backward looks
At my dear land of story-books.

—ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON. (By permission.)

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

Once there was a king who had a little girl whom he loved very much. When she was a year old the king and the queen made a great feast, and the fairies were asked to come. The plates and knives and forks were all gold; and the glasses were cut from the most beautiful crystal.

But there was one old fairy who had been forgotten, and when she came in, she had no golden knife and fork, nor any crystal cup to drink from.

The other fairies had gifts for the little girl. One gave her love; one, beauty; another, grace; and still another, music. But the old fairy was so angry because she had been forgotten that, when the turn came for her gift, she said, "She

shall pierce her hand with a spindle and die of the wound."

Then a young fairy, who had hidden herself in fear of this very thing, came forward and said: "She must indeed pierce her hand with a spindle; but do not weep, for she shall not die. She shall sleep for a hundred years."

This was bad enough, but it was so much better than the old fairy's gift that the king and queen were quite happy again. The king said that there must be no spinning, and that all the spindles must be put away.

All went well for fifteen years. One day the princess went into a cottage, and there sat an old woman spinning. The woman lived all alone, and had never heard of the king's command.

"Oh! how pretty!" cried the princess. "Do let me try!" But the first thing she did was to pierce her hand, and down she fell in a deep sleep.

The old woman felt very sorry, but there was no help for it. She called the maids and pages, and the king and queen. They carried the prin-

cess home, put her in her own bed, and then sent for the good fairy.

When the good fairy came, she found them all in great sorrow, but she had thought of a fine plan. "I shall put you all to sleep for a hundred years, too," she said; "then the princess will not be lonely when she wakes."

A hundred years went by, and a prince lost his way in a thick wood. He saw at last the towers of a castle, and made his way to it as best he could. In the halls were the pages and the maids, all fast asleep. In a great chair sat the king, fast asleep too, with his beard grown down into his lap.

And in the room beyond was the lovely princess, looking so sweet and fair that the prince stooped and kissed her.

There was a sharp clash, and everybody woke up. The pages and the maids, the king and the queen and the lovely princess, all opened their eyes as if they had slept but a little while; for to them it was as if the hundred years had never been.

SEPTEMBER

The golden-rod is yellow,
 The corn is turning brown,
 The trees in apple orchards
 With fruit are bending down.

The gentian's bluest fringes
 Are curling in the sun,
 In dusky pods the milkweed
 Its hidden silk has spun.

The sedges flaunt their harvest
 In every meadow nook,
 And asters by the brookside
 Make asters in the brook.

By all these lovely tokens
 September days are here,
 With summer's best of beauty
 And autumn's best of cheer.

—HELEN HUNT JACKSON.

Cloud and sun together make the year:
 Without some storm no rainbow could appear.

THE TRAVELLING MUSICIANS

A donkey who was too old to work heard his master say that he must be sold to the boneman.

"I will not stay here to be sold," thought the donkey. "I shall go to the city and play in the band."

He had not gone far when he saw a dog lying on the ground.



"Why do you lie there?" he asked.

"Oh," said the dog, "I am too old to help my master. He says that I must be sold to the boneman, so I have run away."

"Then come with me," said the donkey. "I am going to the city to play in the band. I can blow the horn and you can tap the drum."

"Very well," said the dog; and off they went together.

They soon came to a cat sitting by the road and looking very sad.

"Why are you sad?" asked the donkey.

"How can I be happy?" said the cat. "I am too old to catch mice, and my mistress says that she must give me to the boneman, so I have run away."

"Come with us to the city," said the donkey. "You are a good night singer, so you can sing in our band."



"With all my heart," said the cat, and off they all went together.

After a while they came to a farm-yard. A rooster stood on the gate, crowing and screaming with might and main.

"Why are you making so much noise?" asked the donkey.

"I shall tell you," said he. "The cook says

that the guests are coming to-morrow, so she is going to make broth of me for their dinner."

"Listen," said the donkey. "You have a good voice. Come with us to the city to join the band."

"Thank you," said the rooster, and they all went on together.

At night they came to a forest.

"Let us stay here," said the donkey, and he lay down on the ground. The dog lay down, too. The rooster perched near the top of a tree, and the cat found a place on one of its big branches.

Before they went to sleep the rooster saw a light in the forest. He called to his friends and told them what he saw.

"It must come from a house," said the donkey. "Let us go on and see."

"Yes," said the dog. "I should like a good bone for my supper."

When they reached the house they saw that the light came from a very high window.

"How can we see into the room?" said the cat.

"I am not tall enough," said the dog.

"Nor I," said the donkey.

At last they thought of a plan. The donkey stood under the window and the dog stood on his back. The cat climbed to the dog's back, and the rooster flew up and stood on the cat's back.

"What do you see?" asked the donkey.

"What do I see?" said the rooster. "I see four robbers eating at a table. They have bread and meat and many other good things."



"That ought to be our supper," said the dog.

"Yes, yes!" cried the cat. "I am so hungry that I cannot sleep."

"We must drive the robbers away," whispered the rooster. "But how can it be done?"

Then the four friends tried and tried to think of a plan.

At last the donkey said: "I know how we can frighten the robbers. When I count three, let us all begin to make as much noise as we can."

"Now!—One! two! three!" What a noise they made! The donkey brayed, and the dog barked, and the cat mewed, and the rooster crowed.

The robbers jumped up from the table and ran into the woods as fast as they could go.

The four friends went into the house and helped themselves to the food.

When they had eaten their supper, they put out the light and each found a place to sleep. The donkey lay down in the yard. The dog went behind the door. The cat curled up in front of the fire, and the rooster flew to the back of a chair.

After some time the robbers, who had not fled far, got over their fright. One, bolder than the rest, entered the house. All was still and dark. He took a candle from his pocket to light it



at the coals on the hearth. But these coals were the two bright eyes of the cat. The cat did not like him to put the candle in her eye, so she sprang at his face and scratched him.

He ran to the door, and, as he was going out, the dog jumped up and bit him on the leg. On

he ran through the yard, when the donkey wheeled round and kicked him on the back. The noise awoke the rooster, and he crowed with all his might.

He hurried to his comrades as fast as his legs could carry him. He told them that a witch was in the house, who had nearly scratched his eyes out; that a man with a knife had stabbed him in the leg; that a huge monster in the yard had hit him with a club; and that some one on the roof was telling them where he was.

The robbers never dared to go back to that house.

The travelling musicians said they would rather stay there than go on to the city, and for all that I know they are still living in the little house in the woods.

Who says "I will" to what is right,
"I won't" to what is wrong,
Although a tender little child,
Is truly great and strong.



FAREWELL TO THE FARM

The coach is at the door at last ;
The eager children, mounting fast
And kissing hands, in chorus sing :
Good-bye, good-bye, to everything !

To house and garden, field and lawn,
The meadow-gates we swang upon,
To pump and stable, tree and swing,
Good-bye, good-bye, to everything !

And fare you well for evermore,
O ladder at the hayloft door,
O hayloft where the cobwebs cling,
Good-bye, good-bye, to everything !

Crack goes the whip, and off we go ;
The trees and houses smaller grow ;
Last, round the woody turn we swing :
Good-bye, good-bye, to everything !

— ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON. (By permission.)



LITTLE BOY BLUE

The little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and stanch he stands ;
And the little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket moulds in his hands.
Time was when the little toy dog was new,
And the soldier was passing fair ;
And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue
Kissed them and put them there.

LITTLE BOY BLUE

29

"Now, don't you go till I come," he said,

"And don't you make any noise!"

So, toddling off to his trundle-bed,

He dreamt of the pretty toys;

And, as he was dreaming, an angel song

Awakened our Little Boy Blue —

Oh! the years are many, the years are long,

But the little toy friends are true!

Aye, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,

Each in the same old place —

Awaiting the touch of a little hand,

The smile of a little face;

And they wonder, as waiting the long years through

In the dust of that little chair,

What has become of our Little Boy Blue,

Since he kissed them and put them there.

— EUGENE FIELD.

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LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

In a country on the other side of the sea there once lived a little girl who was very good and kind. Because she was so good and kind her mother made her a pretty hood to wear when she went out. The hood was as red as the sun when it sets behind the clouds on a summer day.



It was so pretty and looked so well on the little girl, that all her friends called her Little Red Riding Hood, as if that was her name. Some said that it was a magic hood and would keep her from all harm; but how they knew this I cannot tell.

One day her mother said to her: "Do you think you could find the way to your grandmother's? I should like to send her a cake for her Sunday dinner."

The little girl said: "Yes, mother, I think I know the way. I have been there with you very

often; and I think that I am now big enough to go alone."

"Well, then," said her mother, "put on your hood, take this basket on your arm, and go. Ask your grandmother how she is, and tell her that you have brought a nice cake for her Sunday dinner."

"And may I stay a little while?" asked the child.

"You may stay to rest awhile, but be sure to be home before dark."

Little Red Riding Hood was as happy as a lark. She walked along the road and thought what a great thing it was to go to her grandmother's all alone. She heard the birds singing in the trees, and she saw the daisies nodding to her as she went along. She thought they were all saying: "What a big girl our Little Red Riding Hood is! She can go to her grandmother's all alone."

By and by, she came to some thick, shady woods where the trees were very high. But she was not afraid; for she did not know there was anything in the world that would harm a gentle

little girl. She knew the road quite well. She did not fear that she would get lost among the great trees.

Now, a Wolf who lived in the woods saw Little Red Riding Hood, and he thought that he would carry her off to his den. So he ran and met her, and said, "Good morning, Little Red Riding Hood."

The little girl looked at him kindly, and said: "Good morning, sir! But I am not sure that I know your name."

"Oh, my name is Sir Wolf, and I am an old friend of your mother's. She knows me very well."

"I am glad to see you, Sir Wolf," said the child. "But I must not stop to talk."

The Wolf would have carried her off then, but he heard some woodcutters near by, and he was afraid they might see him. So he smiled and said, "Where are you going with your basket, little lamb?"

"Oh, I am going to my grandmother's to take her a nice cake," said the gentle child.

"Where does your grandmother live?" said the Wolf.

"She lives in the cottage by the river," said Little Red Riding Hood. "You can see it as soon as you pass through the woods."

"Oh, I know," said the Wolf. "Sometime I



shall go there with you, and see your dear grandmother. But I cannot go now. So good-bye!"

The woodcutters had seen him, and were coming down the road; so he ran among the trees on the other side. "I shall have her yet," he said to himself.

As soon as the woodcutters had gone, the Wolf ran by a shorter way through the woods to the

river. In a little while he came to the cottage. "I wonder whether the grandmother is at home," he said.

The door was shut. He knocked. All was still in the house. He knocked again and again. Still nobody came to the door. Then he lifted the latch and peeped in. The grandmother was not at home. The bed where she had slept was not made up. Her nightcap was on a chair.

"Now I shall have them both," said the Wolf. He went in, and shut the door behind him. Then he put the grandmother's nightcap on his head, and got into bed. He pulled the blanket up over his face, and lay very still.

Soon the Wolf heard some one walking. He knew who it was. Then there was a tap at the door. "Who is there?" he said; and he tried to talk like the grandmother.

"It is I, grandmother! It is Little Red Riding Hood!"

"Oh, I am so glad you have come!" said the Wolf. "Lift the latch, little lamb, and the door will open."

Little Red Riding Hood opened the door and went in. She saw the Wolf in the bed, but she thought that it was her grandmother.

"Oh, grandmother, what is the matter?" she said. "See, I have brought you a nice cake for your Sunday dinner."

"You are very kind," said the Wolf. "Come to the bed, and let me look at your sweet face." Little Red Riding Hood went towards the bed. She was afraid now, but she did not know why.

The Wolf lay very still. "Give me your hand, little lamb," said he.

"Oh, grandmother, what makes you so hoarse?" said Little Red Riding Hood.

"Only a cold, my dear, only a cold."

"But what makes your eyes so bright?"



"The better to see you, my dear, the better to see you."

"What makes your arms so long?"

"The better to hug you, my child."

By this time Little Red Riding Hood was very



close to the bed. "Oh, grandmother, your ears look like Sir Wolf's. What makes them so long?"

"The better to hear you, my dear."

"But what makes your teeth so big?"

"THE BETTER TO EAT YOU UP!" cried the

Wolf, and he jumped from the bed, with his mouth wide open. But just then the grandmother came in, and the woodcutters with her. The Wolf tried to run out, but they were too quick for him. "Take that! and that! and that!" they cried. And that was the last of Sir Wolf.

Little Red Riding Hood ran crying to her grandmother. "Oh, grandmother," she said; "I am so glad that you have come! See the nice cake that I have brought for your Sunday dinner!"

"And I am glad, too!" said the grandmother. "But I came not a moment too soon."

Then she gave Little Red Riding Hood a cup of sweet milk to drink; and when they had rested a little while she took her by the hand and led her through the woods to her home.

Be good, sweet maid, and let who can be clever;
Do lovely things, not dream them, all day long;
And so make Life and Death and that For Ever
One grand sweet song.



GOOD NIGHT AND GOOD MORNING

A fair little girl sat under a tree,
Sewing as long as her eyes could see;
Then smoothed her work and folded it right,
And said, "Dear work, good night, good night!"

Such a number of rooks came over her head,
Crying, "Caw! Caw!" on their way to bed;
She said, as she watched their curious flight,
"Little black things, good night, good night!"

The horses neighed, and the oxen lowed,
The sheep's "Bleat! Bleat!" came over the road,—

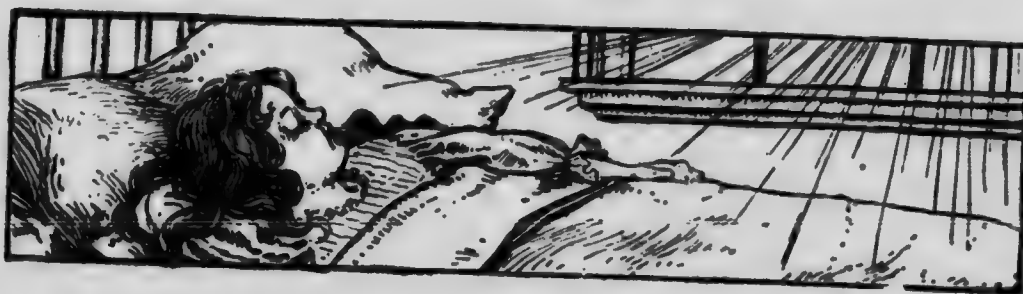
All seeming to say, with a quiet delight,
"Good little girl, good night, good night!"

She did not say to the sun, "Good night!"
Though she saw him there like a ball of light;
For she knew he had God's time to keep
All over the world, and never could sleep.

The tall pink foxglove bowed his head;
The violets curtsied and went to bed;
And good little Lucy tied up her hair,
And said, on her knees, her favorite prayer.

And while on her pillow she softly lay,
She knew nothing more till again it was day;
And all things said to the beautiful sun,
"Good morning, good morning! our work is
begun!"

— LORD HOUGHTON.



THE FRINGED GENTIAN



Once the Queen of the Fairies was out late at night. The midnight hour had passed, and the silver moon, the fairy lamp, had swung down in the west and out of sight.

Hurrying to a gentian, the fairy asked for shelter. "Who

are you, that you disturb me at this hour of night?"

called the sleepy gentian.

"I am the Queen of the Fairies," cried the little lady.

"Very well, then, if you are the Queen of the Fairies, you can find places enough to sleep. Go away and let me sleep."

Poor little Fairy Queen! She was afraid out in the big, dark world.

"I shall try again," said she. And so, going up to another gentian not far away, she timidly said, "Can you give me shelter, good flower?"

Out peeped the gentian. "Poor little lady," said the flower. "Whoever you are, you are too little to be out in the dark. Come in, and let me cover you over till the sun comes."

Then the little tired fairy slept soundly until morning began to dawn. Then, as she hastened away in the dim light, she turned to the kind gentian and said, "Kind friend, you and all your children shall hereafter be known from all other gentians by the power which I now give you to open and receive the warm light of the sun when first he peeps upon the world."

One gentle word that I may speak,

Or one kind loving deed,

May, though a trifle poor and weak,

Prove like a tiny seed:

And who can tell what good may spring

From such a tiny little thing?



THE VALLEY OF SLEEP

Do you know the way to the Land of Nod,
That city old and gray,
Where only at night the people awake
And at night the children play?

I will tell you the way to that Land of Nod,
'Tis the pleasantest way that I know,
For you roll and roll, and roll and roll,
Down the hills of long ago.

You lay you down on the sweet green grass
When the flowers are going to sleep;
You shut your eyes and listen awhile
To the little night-bird's peep.

And then you roll, and roll and roll,
Down into the valley so sweet,
Where the fireflies dance with their fairy lamps
While the angels their night-watches keep.

Don't open your eyes or you won't get in
Past those sentries of drowsy sleep,
Who guard this city from waking eyes,
And from even the eyes that peep.

Then hush! and listen as down you roll,
For the gates are opening wide;
You can hear the bells of the fairy elves
As far through the valley they ride.

Then roll and roll, and roll and roll,
Down into that valley so deep,
Where the fairies dance with their firefly lamps,
When the children are all asleep,
When the children are all asleep.

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN



Hamelin is a little town in a country across the sea. Long ago a strange thing happened there. A great many rats came into the town. They were big, fierce rats. They killed the cats and dogs and bit the children. They ate the food on the tables. They ran up and down the streets in the daytime.

The Wise Men tried to think of a way to drive the rats out of the town. Cats and dogs could not do it, and the rats would not eat poison.

The Mayor said, "I wish I had a trap big and strong enough to catch the rats. I would give all my gold for it."

Just then a knock was heard at the door. "Come in," said the Mayor. The door opened and in came a very strange man.

He was tall and thin, with bright blue eyes and light hair. His long coat was half of yellow

and half of red. No one had ever seen him before.

The strange man went up to the Mayor and said, "I can drive the rats out of the town."

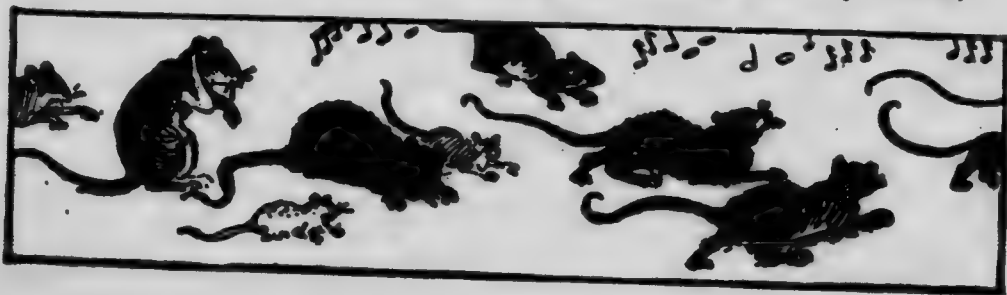
"Who are you," cried the Wise Men, "and how can you do this thing?"

"I am called the Pied Piper. I cannot tell you what I shall do. If you will promise to give me a thousand pieces of gold, I shall soon show you."

"A thousand!" cried the Mayor. "I will give you five thousand."

Then the Pied Piper went into the street. He took a pipe from his long coat and began to play a merry tune. Soon the rats came running from the houses.

"Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, gray rats, tawny rats,



Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives —
Followed the Piper for their lives."

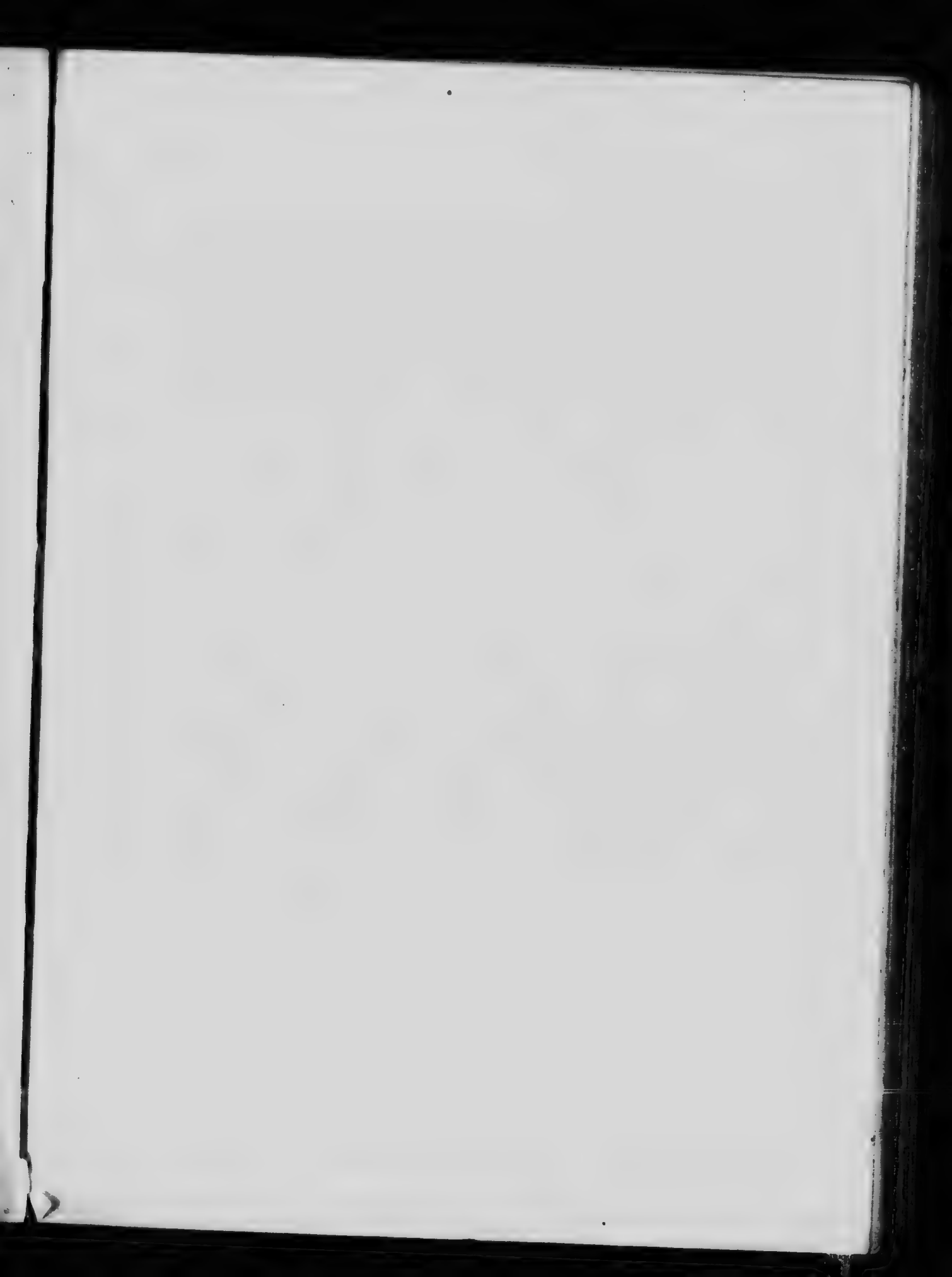
The Piper walked slowly down the street, playing a merry tune, and the rats followed, dancing. They thought the music was about good things to eat. They forgot everything else as they ran after the Piper. When they came to the river, every rat danced into the water and was drowned.

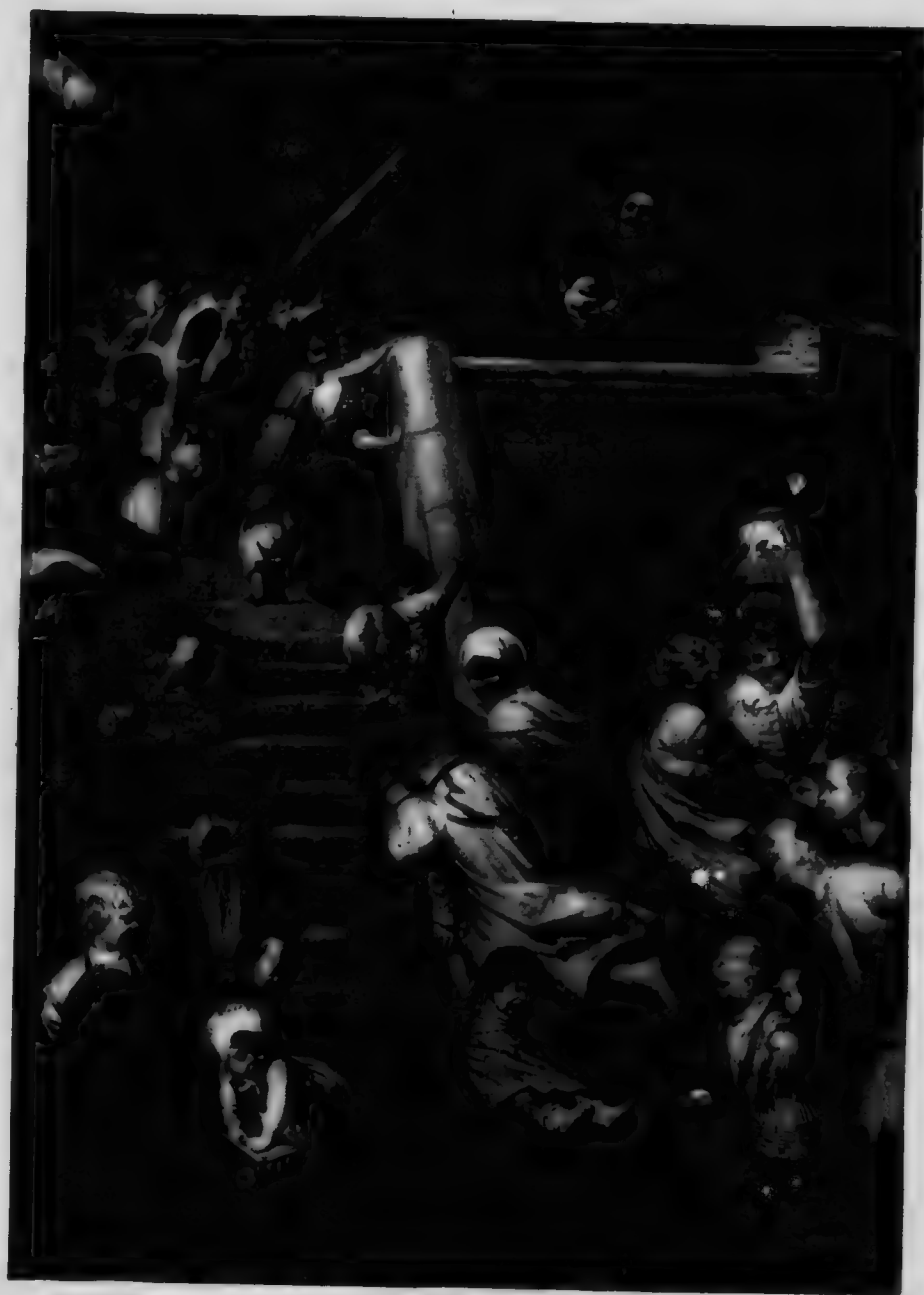
How happy the people were! They rang the bells and shouted for joy.

Then the Pied Piper said to the Mayor, "Now, if you please, give me the thousand pieces of gold."

"A thousand pieces of gold!" cried the Mayor.
"That is too much money. I will give you fifty."







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From painting by Kaulbach

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN



"If you do not give me the money, you will be sorry," said the strange man.

"You can do us no harm," said the Mayor.
"The rats are dead. You cannot bring them back."

Then the Pied Piper went into the street again.
He played a few sweet notes on his pipe. At once the children came out of the houses.

"All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,
Tripping and skipping ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter."

The Piper walked down the street and through the fields. When he reached the foot of the hill, a door opened and he went in, still playing the beautiful tune. All the children followed him, and the door closed.



One little boy who was lame could not run as fast as the other children. When the Mayor and the Wise Men came running up, they found him crying.

"Why do you cry?" said the Mayor.

"I wished to go with the other children," he said. "When the man played on his pipe, it told us about a beautiful land. The sun was shining and the birds were singing. The children played in the fields. They were never ill nor lame. I ran as fast as I could, but when I came the children were gone, and I could not find the door."

The Mayor sent men north, south, east, and west to find the Piper. He said, "Tell him that I will give him all the gold in the town if he will come back and bring the children with him."

The fathers and mothers of Hamelin waited and waited, but their little ones did not come back.

All this happened long ago, but no one has ever seen the Piper or the little children since.

If you go to Hamelin, the people will show you the hill and the river. You may walk down Pied Piper street, but you will hear no music. No one is allowed to sing or play a tune on the street down which the children followed the Pied Piper to the land beyond the hills.



If wisdom's ways you'd wisely seek,
Five things observe with care: —
Of whom you speak, to whom you speak,
And how, and when, and where.

ALL THINGS BEAUTIFUL

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful, —
The Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens,
Each little bird that sings, —
He made their glowing colors,
He made their tiny wings.

The purple-headed mountain,
The river running by,
The morning and the sunset
That lighteth up the sky ;

The tall trees in the greenwood,
The pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden, —
He made them every one.

He gave us eyes to see them,
And lips that we might tell
How great is God Almighty
Who hath made all things well.

—JOHN KEBLE.

HOW THE BEAR LOST HIS TAIL

One cold morning the bear met the fox coming along the road with a fine string of fish.

"Good morning," said the bear.

"Good morning, Mr. Bear," said the fox, very politely. He was rather afraid of the bear, so he thought it best to be civil.

"Those seem very fine fish, Mr. Fox. I have not seen finer for many a day. Pray, where did you get them?"

"I caught them myself, in the pond," replied the fox.

"I wish I knew how to fish," said the bear, "for then I would go fishing, too."

"Well, Mr. Bear," said the fox, "I would not tell everybody, but you have always been such a good friend of mine that I shall show you how to fish. Come with me to the pond to-morrow evening."

The bear had been asleep for three or four months and had wakened up very hungry. The sun made it warm at noon, but the nights were yet very cold.

The bear and the fox were at the pond shortly after dusk. The fox showed the bear how to make a hole in the ice. "Now," said he, "you must put your tail down into the water and keep it there a long time. Then, when you pull it out, you shall have a fine string of fish."

The bear put his tail down into the water, and the fox went away. All night long the bear sat at the hole thinking what a fine lot of fish he would have for breakfast.

Red streaks in the east told the bear it would soon be daylight. "Now I shall pull out the fish," said the bear. And he pulled and tugged, but the tail did not budge. It was frozen fast in the ice.

The fox was not the least afraid of the bear now. "Good morning, Mr. Bear," said he; "you must have plenty of fish by this time. Come for a walk before breakfast."

The bear did not know what to say. He gave one lurch forward with all his weight. The fox heard the snap and sped quickly to the woods.

"I should like to find that fox," was the last word heard.

A BOY'S WISH

Ring-ting! I wish I were a Primrose,
A bright yellow Primrose blowing in the Spring!
 The stooping boughs above me,
 The wandering bee to love me,
The fern and moss to creep across,
 And the Elm-tree for our king!

Nay — stay! I wish I were an Elm-tree,
A great lofty Elm-tree, with green leaves gay!
 The winds would set them dancing,
 The sun and moonshine glance in,
The birds would house among the boughs,
 And sweetly sing!

Oh — no! I wish I were a Robin,
A Robin or a little Wren, everywhere to go;
 Through forest, field, or garden,
 And ask no leave or pardon,
Till Winter comes with icy thumbs
 To ruffle up our wing!

Well-tell! Where should I fly to,
Where go to sleep in the dark wood or dell?
Before a day was over,
Home comes the rover,
For Mother's kiss, — sweeter this
Than any other thing!

— WILLIAM ALLINGHAM. (By permission.)

THE THREE BEARS



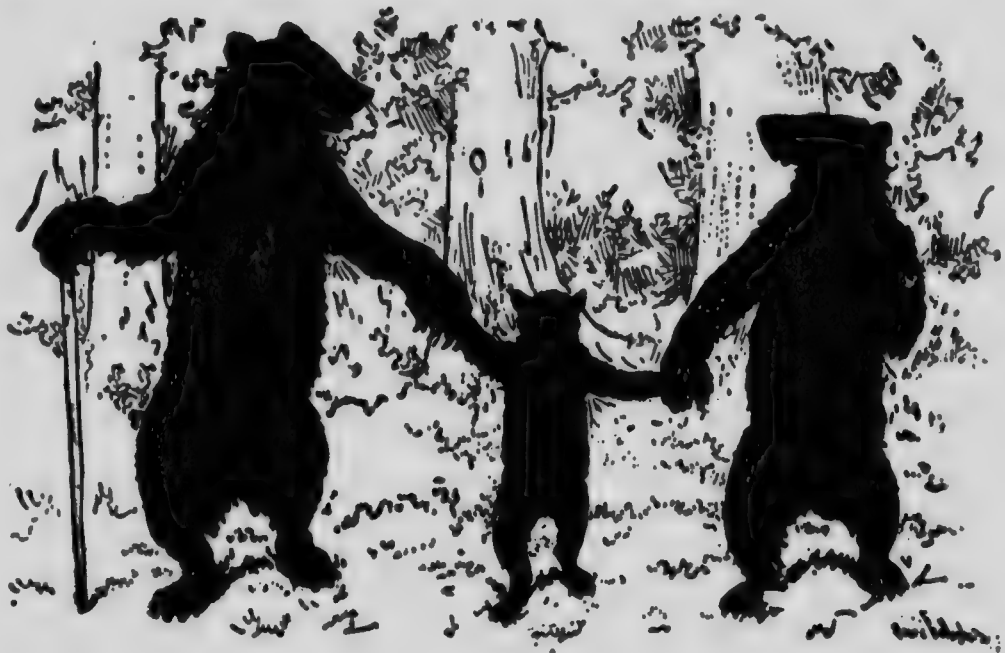
Long ago, in a far-off country, there lived a little girl called Silverlocks because her hair was so bright and curly. One day she ram-
bled off into the woods chasing the bees, plucking the wild blossoms, and listening to the songs of the birds. She wandered on and on until she came to a lovely spot where no one had been before. At last she spied a queer little house with the front

door half open. Slyly she peeped in, and seeing no one, she quickly made up her mind to go boldly into the house and look about her.

Now it chanced that the house was the home of a family of three bears. The first was the great papa, called Rough Bruin, from his thick, shaggy coat; the second was a smaller bear, Mrs. Bruin, sometimes called Mammy Muff, from her soft, thick fur; the third was a funny little bear, their own dear pet, called Tiny.

That forenoon, Mrs. Bruin had just cooked a pot of nice, rich rabbit soup and had served it in three bowls. While the soup was cooling, the bears had gone out for a walk, leaving the door as Silverlocks had found it. The smell of the steaming soup made her feel hungry, and, looking on the table, she saw the three bowls each with a spoon beside it. There was a big, black bowl full of soup for Rough Bruin, a smaller white bowl of soup for Mammy Muff, and a little blue bowl for Tiny.

It did not take Silverlocks long to make up her mind how to act — taste the nice-smelling soup



she would, happen what might. First, looking around to see that no one was in sight, she began with the soup in Rough Bruin's great bowl, but it was so very hot with pepper that it burned her mouth and throat. Then she tried Mammy Muff's white bowl, but the soup was too salty, and she did not like it at all. Then she tried Tiny's soup; it was just to her taste, and there was some nice white bread to eat with it.

Feeling tired from her long romp through the woods, she thought she would rest while supping Tiny's soup. There were three chairs in the

room. One, a very large oak chair, was the great bear's seat; another, of a smaller size with a velvet cushion, was Mrs. Bruin's chair; and a little chair with a rush bottom belonged to Tiny. All these chairs Silverlocks tried in turn.

She did not like the very large chair, it was too hard; she did not like the smaller chair, it was too soft; but the little chair with the rush bottom she found to be just right. So she sat down in it with the bowl upon her lap, and supped and ate until she did not leave a drop of soup or a bit of bread for hungry little Tiny.

The soup all finished, she stood up in the chair to put the bowl and spoon back on the table, when — what do you think happened? — her feet went right through the rush bottom of Tiny's chair. She fell, but quickly jumped up again, seeming to think it was all fine fun.



Where next? She must see what is at the head of that stairway. So up she went and found herself in a bedroom where there were three beds, side by side.

Now one of these was a large bed for the big bear; there was also a smaller bed for Mrs. Bruin, and a nice little bed for Master Tiny. Being sleepy, she thought she would lie down and have a short nap. So, after taking off her shoes, she first jumped on to the largest bed, but it was made so high at the top that she could not lie on it; she then tried the next bed, but that was too high at the foot; but she found the little bear's bed to be just right, so she got snugly into it. She let her cheek rest gently on the soft pillow, and watched the bluefly buzzing about in the fold of the curtain, till she fell fast asleep, and dreamed, and laughed in her sleep about the little chair.

While she was dreaming away, the bears came home tired and hungry, and went at once to try their soup. The big bear cried out in a loud, angry voice:—

"WHO HAS MEDDLED WITH MY SOUP?"

Mammy Muff next said in a loud voice, too, but not so gruffly as Rough Bruin:—

"WHO HAS MEDDLED WITH MY SOUP?"

But when Tiny saw his little blue bowl empty



he bit his paws for grief, and whined with his shrill little voice:—

"Who has meddled with my soup?"

Very soon the big bear's voice was heard again:—

"WHO HAS BEEN IN MY CHAIR, AND PUT IT OUT OF ITS PLACE?"

And Mrs. Bruin grumbled out:—

"WHO HAS BEEN SITTING IN MY CHAIR, AND PUT IT OUT OF ITS PLACE?"

But poor Tiny, more grieved than either of them, sobbed, as he cried:—

"Somebody has been sitting in my chair, and broken it."

They now looked about below stairs, feeling sure there must be some one in the house, and then upstairs they all went, snuffing and scolding in very bad humor.

Soon the big bear broke out in a fury:—

"SOME ONE HAS BEEN ON MY BED AND RUMPLED IT!"

Then followed Mammy Muff:—

"SOME ONE HAS BEEN ON MY BED AND RUMPLED IT!"

Tiny next jumped on to the foot of his own small bed, and in a moment squealed out:—

"Some one has been on my bed and—oh, here she is!" And he opened his mouth, and looked as fierce and as angry as he felt.

The piercing tones of Tiny's voice wakened Silverlocks right up. She was startled to find herself nose to nose with a bear, and still more frightened on seeing two other great bears in the room. It

was well for her the window happened to be open. She slid off the bed in an instant, then out of the window, and down she went on the grass below. Over and over she rolled, but she soon got up and hastily ran off, for she thought the bears were all coming out of the window to catch her. She reached home safely, but still very much frightened.

Silverlocks never forgot the fright that the sight of the three bears had given her, and ever afterwards she was very careful to keep away from places where she had no right to go, and not to meddle with things that did not belong to her.



FOUR SUNBEAMS

Four little sunbeams came earthward one day,
Shining and dancing along on their way,

Resolved that their course should be blest.

"Let us try," they all whispered, "some kindness to do, —

Not to seek our own pleasure all the day through, —

Then meet in the eve at the west."

One sunbeam went in at an old cottage door,
And played hide-and-seek with a child on the floor,

Till baby laughed loud in his glee,

And chased with delight his strange playmate so bright;

The little hands grasped in vain for the light

That ever before them would flee.

One crept to a couch where an invalid lay,
And brought him a gleam of a sweet summer day,

Its bird-song and beauty and bloom,

Till pain was forgotten and weary unrest;

In fancy he roamed to the scenes he loved best,

Far away from the dim, darkened room.

One stole to the heart of a flower that was sad,
And loved and caressed her until she was glad,
And lifted her white face again.

For love brings content to the lowliest lot,
And finds something sweet in the dreariest spot,
And lightens all labor and pain.

And one, where a little blind girl sat alone,
Not sharing the mirth of her playfellows, shone
On hands that were folded and pale ;
And it kissed the poor eyes that had never known
sight,

And that never should gaze on the beautiful light,
Till angels should lift up the veil.

At last, when the shadows of evening were falling,
And the sun, their great father, his children was
calling,

Four sunbeams sped into the west.
All said : " We have found that in seeking the
pleasure
Of others we've filled to the full our own
measure."

Then softly they sank to their rest.

THE ANXIOUS LEAF

Once upon a time a little leaf was heard to sigh, as leaves do when a gentle wind is about.

"What is the matter, little leaf?" said the twig.

"The wind has just told me that some day it will pull me off, and throw me down to die on the ground," sobbed the little leaf.

The twig told it to the branch on which it grew, and the branch told it to the tree; and when the tree heard it, it rustled all over, and sent back word to the leaf, "Do not be afraid; hold on tightly, and you shall not go until you wish it."

So the leaf stopped sighing, and went on rustling and singing. Every time the tree shook itself and stirred up all its leaves, the branches shook themselves, and the little twig shook itself, and the little leaf danced up and down merrily, as if nothing could ever pull it off.

And so it grew all summer long. At length autumn came, and the little leaf saw all the

leaves becoming very beautiful. Some were yellow, some scarlet, and some striped with many colors. Then it asked the tree what this meant.

And the tree said, "All the leaves are getting ready to fly away, and they have put on these beautiful colors because of joy." Then the little leaf began to wish to fly away, too, and grew very beautiful like the rest.

When it was very gay in all its colors, it saw that the branches were dull and gray, and so it said, "Oh, branches! why are you so gray and we so red and golden?" The branches answered softly, "We must keep on our working clothes, for our life is not done; but your clothes are for a holiday, because your tasks are over."

Just then a little puff of wind came, and the leaf let go without thinking of it; and the wind took it up and turned it over and over, and whirled it like a spark of fire in the air, and then it dropped down gently under the edge of the fence among hundreds of leaves, and fell into a dream, and never wakened up to tell what it dreamed about.

ROBERT OF LINCOLN

Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat:

“Bob-o’-link! Bob-o’-link!

Spink, spank, spink;

Never was I afraid of man;

Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can!

Chee, chee, chee.”

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,

Flecked with purple — a pretty sight!

There, as the mother sits all day,

Robert is singing with all his might;

“Bob-o’-link! Bob-o’-link!

Spink, spank, spink;

Nice good wife, that never goes out,

Keeping house while I frolic about.

Chee, chee, chee.”

Soon as the little ones chip the shell,

Six wide mouths are open for food.

Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,

Gathering seeds for the hungry brood:—

“Bob-o’-link! Bob-o’-link!

Spink, spank, spink ;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee."

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work, and silent with care.
Off his holiday garment is laid,
Half forgotten that merry air : —
" Bob-o'-link ! Bob-o'-link !
Spink, spank, spink ;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee."

Summer wanes ; the children are grown ;
Fun and frolic no more he knows ;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone ;
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes,
" Bob-o'-link ! Bob-o'-link !
Spink, spank, spink ;
When you can pipe that merry old strain,
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
Chee, chee, chee."

— WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

THE BIRDS AND THEIR NESTS

There is an old story which says that the magpie was the first bird to build a nest.

One day all the birds came to her and said, "Mrs. Magpie, won't you teach us how to make pretty nests like your own?"

"Oh, yes," said the magpie, kindly. "I will show you just how it is done." Then she told them to sit around her, and she would build a nest while they were looking on. She said, "You have only to notice what I do."

She brought some mud from the side of the brook, and made it into a kind of round cake. The birds sat very still, and watched her until the cake was finished. Then the thrush cried out, "Oh, I see how the nest is built! You first make a cake of mud, and then pat it down in the middle." And she flew away to try for herself; and no thrush has learned anything about nest-building since.

The magpie next took some twigs, and laid them around the cake of mud. "Say no

more!" cried the blackbird. "I understand it all." Away he flew to the green thickets by the river; and that is how blackbirds build their nests to this very day.

Then the magpie put a thin layer of mud on the twigs, and smoothed it a little with her beak. "Oh, that is all that I need to know," said the wise owl. "Who— who— who would have thought it so simple a thing?" He flew to the top of a great oak tree, where he sat for a long time, looking at the moon and saying, "Who— who— who!"

Then the magpie took some long, slender twigs, and twined them around the outside. "That is just the thing!" cried the song sparrow, and off he went. And song sparrows still make their nests by twining twigs.

After this, the magpie took some feathers and fine moss, and lined the nest until it was a very comfortable place indeed.

"That suits me!" said the starling, and off he flew. And everybody knows that starlings have built well-lined nests ever since.

The magpie kept on working and working. But every bird, when it had learned a little about nest-building, flew away without waiting to the end of the lesson. At last no one was left but the turtle-dove. It had paid no attention to what the magpie was doing, and so had not learned anything at all.

It sat on a branch above the magpie's nest, and kept saying over and over again, "Take two, two, two, two!" But it was looking far away towards the blue mountains in the west, and its thoughts were all with its dear mate whom a cruel hawk had lately snatched away.

"Take two, two, two, two!" mourned the dove. The magpie heard this just as she was twining a slender twig around the top of her nest. So, without looking up, she said, "One will be enough."

But the dove kept on saying, "Take two, two, two, two!" This made the magpie angry, and she said, "Don't I tell you that one will be enough?"

"Take two, two, two, two!" still cried the

turtle-dove. At last the magpie looked up and saw that no bird was near her but the silly dove.

"I'll never give another lesson in nest-building!" she cried. And she flew away and left the dove alone in the tree.

It was no use, after that, for any bird to ask the magpie how to make a nest; and, from that day to this, no bird has learned anything new about its trade.

All the blackbirds, the thrushes, the owls, and the doves still build just as they did a thousand years ago. None of them seem to want better nests; and I doubt if any could learn how to make them better now, even though the magpie should try to teach them again.

THE BUILDING OF THE NEST

They'll come again to the apple tree —

Robin and all the rest —

When the orchard branches are fair to see,

In the snow of the blossoms drest;

And the prettiest thing in the world will be
The building of the nest.

•
Weaving it well, so round and trim,
Hollowing it with care, —
• Nothing too far away for him,
Nothing for her too fair, —
Hanging it safe on the topmost limb,
Their castle in the air.

Ah! mother bird, you'll have weary days
When the eggs are under your breast,
And shadows may darken the dancing rays
When the wee ones leave the nest;
But they'll find their wings in a glad amaze,
And God will see to the rest.

So come to the tree with all your train
When the apple blossoms blow;
Through the April shimmer of sun and rain,
Go flying to and fro;
And sing to our hearts as we watch again
Your fairy building grow.

—MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

THE LAZY FROG

It was such a pretty pool. Every kind of water-plant grew there. The great white water-lilies liked to lay their sleepy heads on its calm, clear surface, and forget-me-nots nestled along its banks.

In the evening, the May-flies danced there, though they knew it was very dangerous, for were there not numerous pink-spotted trout watching for them below, and ready to dart on them at a moment's notice?

One evening, at sunset, a lively little trout was swimming around in the pool and catching the May-flies, when he observed a frog, sitting on the bank, half in the water and half out, and croaking.



"Why don't you come right in?" called the trout. "You can't think how lovely it is. Come along!"

"No, thank you," said the frog; "I'd rather not."

"Perhaps you can't swim," suggested the trout.

"Can't I, though!" answered the frog. "Let me tell you that when human beings try to swim, they imitate me, not you!"

"I should think not," said the trout; "why, the poor things haven't any fins! Well, come along, Froggie, and let's see what you can do."

"No, thank you," said the frog again, "I had enough of the pond when I was a young thing with a large head. I am too old to make such exertions now."

"Too old! too lazy, you mean."

"That's rude," said the frog.

The trout darted upwards and caught a fine May-fly, then dived, and presently appeared again, saying in a gentler tone:—

"Are you hungry, old fellow?"

"Very," answered the frog.

"Don't you like May-flies?"

"Yes, indeed! Don't you see I keep opening my mouth, in hopes one will fly in?"

"You might wait long enough," said the trout, "though your mouth is pretty wide;" and with that he swam away.

Early the next morning, before the dew was off the ground, a sparrow in search of worms saw the frog sitting in the same spot.

"Why don't you come right out and look for your breakfast, Froggie?" said she.

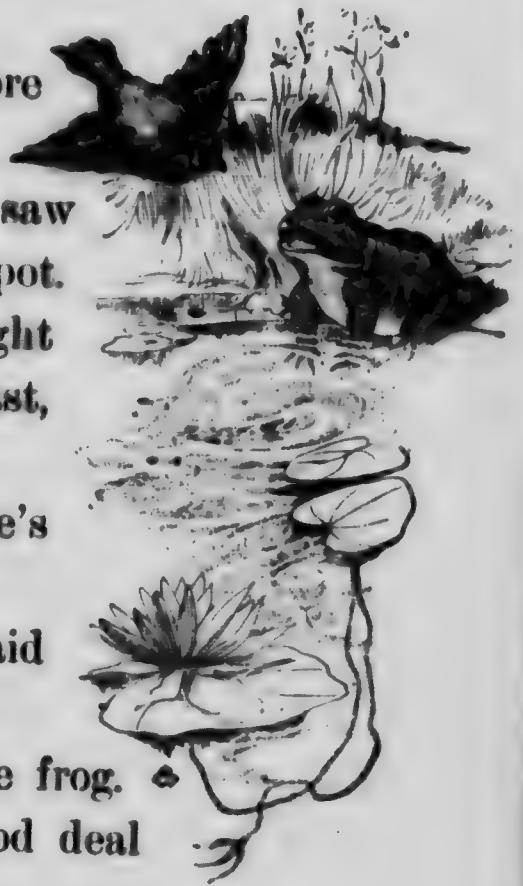
"Much too early to bestir one's self," answered the frog.

"Perhaps you can't hop," said the sparrow.

"Can't I, though!" said the frog. "If I chose, I could hop a good deal farther than you."

"If you can hop, why don't you have a try for that bluebottle sitting on the thistle near you?"

"I'll open my mouth wide," said the frog,



"and perhaps he may come in. Why, there he goes, right away. What an unlucky fellow I am, to be sure!"

"Dear me!" said the sparrow; "do you call that being unlucky? I'm sure my nestlings at home open their mouths wide enough, but nothing ever drops into them but what I put there. But I must be off."

That evening, when the trout came up for his supper, there sat the frog in the same place.

"Good evening, Froggie," he said. "How many flies have popped down your throat since I saw you last? Not many, I'm afraid. Why, you are getting thin; your yellow skin hangs quite loose, and your eyes look positively goggle!"

"I do not like personal remarks," answered the frog.

Next morning the sparrow appeared again, and there sat the frog as before.

"Hello! Froggie," cried she, "you there still! What are you waiting for?"

"I am waiting for Providence to send a fly,"

replied the frog; but this time he spoke slowly, for he was beginning to feel weak and hungry.

"Providence helps only those who help themselves," said the sparrow. "I don't believe a fly will be sent."

"I certainly am most unlucky," said the frog, "considering the number of flies that pass this way; and not one of them comes in, though I open my mouth so wide that my jaws ache."

The sparrow hopped up to him, and looked at him for a moment with her head on one side.

"Well, you *are* a queer fish!"

"I'm not a fish at all," replied the frog; and the sparrow picked up a fine worm, and flew off to her nestlings.

After she was gone the frog observed a little blue butterfly sitting on a blade of grass near. He was so hungry that he stretched his yellow neck for it, but so slowly that the blue butterfly had time to escape. "Just like my luck!" said the frog. "What's the use of trying to do anything for one's self? Nothing ever comes of it. How weak I feel, to be sure! I'll go to sleep."

But he had scarcely closed his eyes when a rustling sound close to him made him open them. There, between him and the sunlight, loomed a dark figure with cruel eyes. It was the great shrike, or butcher-bird. Poor Froggie! While he was thinking what an unlucky fellow he was, the butcher-bird



pounced on him, and put an end to his life; after which she deposited him on a thorn, till she should feel like eating him.

"Well, Froggie, you there still!" cried the trout, when he came up in the evening.

"Why, he's gone! What's become of him?"

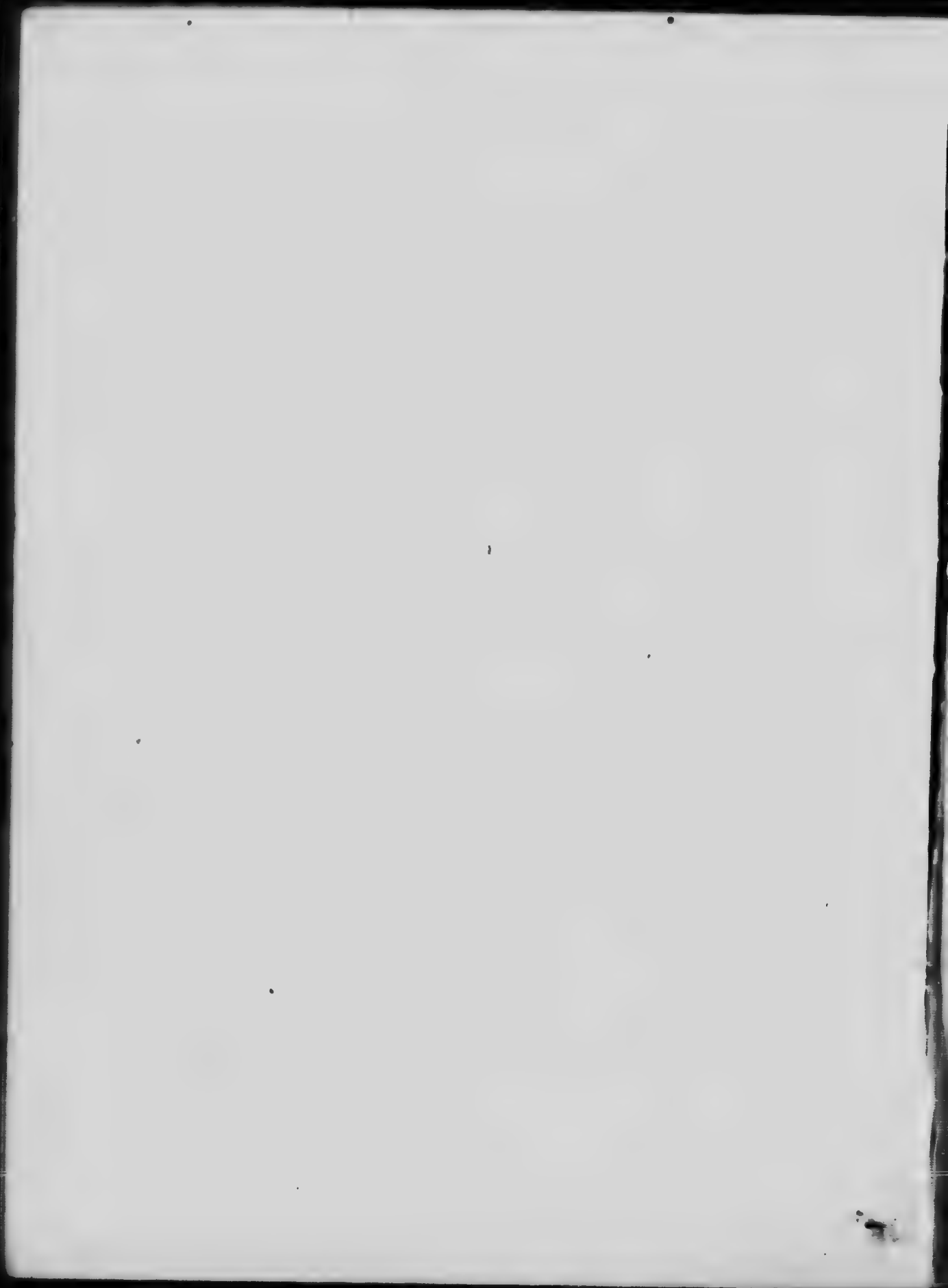
"Killed and spitted," said the sparrow, who, hidden in a bush, had seen everything.

"Poor fellow," said the trout, "I was afraid it might end so."



From painting by Pieter de Vries

CHRIST BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN



The sparrow went home and told her young ones all poor Froggie's history, pointing out to them that it was of no use to be able to hop well, or to be a fine swimmer, if one only sat all day on a bank. Dinners do not drop into people's mouths, however wide open they may be. She told them, too, that the sooner they could manage to fetch their own worms the better she should be pleased.

THE ANT AND THE CRICKET

A silly young Cricket, accustomed to sing
Thro' the warm sunny months of the summer and
spring,

Began to complain when he found that at home
His cupboard was empty, and winter was come.

Not a crumb to be found

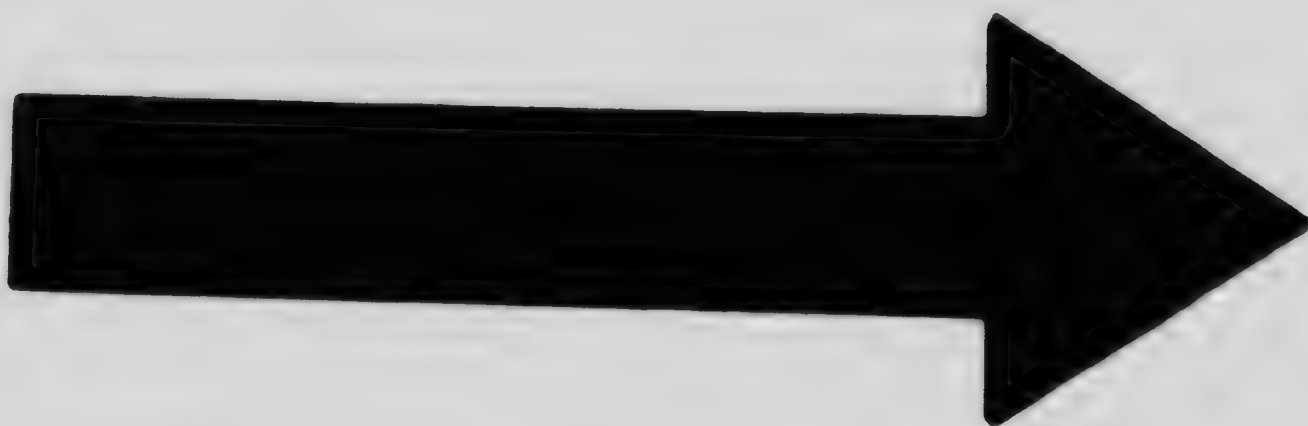
On the snow-covered ground ;

Not a flower could he see,

Not a leaf on a tree ;

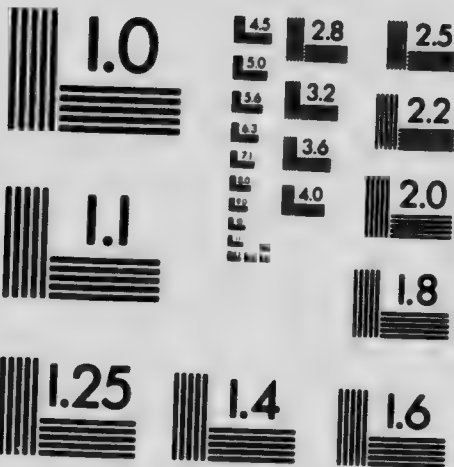
"Oh ! what will become," said the Cricket, "of me?"

At last by starvation and famine made bold,
All dripping with wet and trembling with cold,



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Away he set off to a miserly Ant,
To see whether, to keep him alive, it would grant
 A shelter from rain
 And a mouthful of grain;
He wished only to borrow,
And repay it to-morrow;
If not he must die of starvation and sorrow.

Said the Ant to the Cricket, "I'm your servant
and friend;

But ants never borrow and ants never lend.
But tell me, dear sir, did you lay nothing by
When the weather was warm?" Said the Cricket,
"Not I!

My heart was so light
That I sang day and night,
For all nature looked gay."

"You sang, sir, you say?

Go then," said the Ant, "and dance winter away."

Thus ending, he hastily opened the wicket,
And out of the door turned the poor little Cricket.
Though this is a fable the moral is good:
If you live without work, you will go without food.

SWEET AND LOW

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea —
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest;
Father will come to thee soon.
Rest, rest on mother's breast;
Father will come to thee soon.
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon.
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep!

— ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON.

Every day is a fresh beginning,
Every morn is a world made new.



FILLING A BASKET WITH WATER

There was once a king of Persia who took delight in doing common things in very uncommon ways.

At one time he was in need of a man that would always do just what he was told to do; and he took a very strange way to find him.

He sent out word that he wanted a man to work for him in his garden. More than a hun-

dred came, and from among them he chose the two who seemed to be the brightest and quickest. He showed them a large basket in the garden, and told them to fill it with water from a well.

After they had begun their work he left them, saying, "When the sun is down I shall come and see your work; and if I find that you have done it well, I shall pay you."

For a little while the two men carried water and poured it into the basket, without thinking much about it. But at last one of them said, "What's the use of doing this foolish work? We can never fill the basket, for the water runs out of it as fast as we pour it in."

"That is none of our business," said the other man, whose name was Hassan. "The king has hired us to carry the water, and he must know why he wants it done. And then he has told us that if we do our work well, we shall be paid for it. What more could we wish?"

"You may do as you please," said the first man. "But I am not going to work at anything

so foolish." And with that, he threw down his bucket and went away.

Hassan said not a word, but kept on carrying water all day long. He was very tired, but still he would not give up. At sunset the well was almost empty.

As he poured the last bucketful into the basket, he saw something in it that was very bright. He stooped and picked it up. It was a beautiful gold ring that his bucket had dipped up at the bottom of the well.

"Now I see the use of all this work," he said. "If the king had told me to empty the well, I would have poured the water on the ground, and the ring would not have been found."

Just then the king came. As soon as he saw the ring, he knew that he had found the kind of man he wanted. He told Hassan to keep the ring for himself. "You have done so well in this one little thing," he said, "that now I know I can trust you with many things. You shall be the first of all my servants."



THE QUEST

There once was a restless boy
Who dwelt in a home by the sea,
Where the water danced for joy,
And the wind was glad and free;
But he said, "Good mother, O let me go!
For the dullest place in the world, I know,
Is this little brown house,
This old brown house,
Under the apple tree.

"I will travel east and west;
The loveliest homes I'll see;
And when I have found the best,
Dear mother, I'll come for thee.
I'll come for thee in a year and a day,

And joyfully then we'll haste away
From this little brown house,
This old brown house,
Under the apple tree."

So he travelled here and there,
But never content was he,
Though he saw in lands most fair
The costliest homes there be.
He something missed from the sea or sky,
Till he turned again with a wistful sigh
To the little brown house,
The old brown house,
Under the apple tree.

Then the mother saw and smiled,
While her heart grew glad and free.
"Hast thou chosen a home, my child?
Ah, where shall we dwell?" quoth she.
And he said, "Sweet mother, from east and west,
The loveliest home, and the dearest and best,
Is a little brown house,
An old brown house,
Under an apple tree."

THE FOX

One night, a farmer heard a noise in his chicken-house. So he took a stick, and was halfway down to his barn, when he met a fox running off with a fat chicken.

A hard rap on the head stretched the fox out. Then the man picked it up, turned it first one way, then another, and at last felt certain that it was dead.

"I shall make a nice rug of you, my fine fellow," said the man, as he slung the fox over his shoulder and started back to his house.

The fox was not dead, though it made believe to be, and when they were near the house, it thought it was about time to do something. So it gave the man such a sharp bite, that he let go his hold, and away went the fox.

At another time, the same man was near the bank of a river on which a flock of ducks was swimming and feeding. After a while, a branch of a tree drifted down the stream, and as it came near the ducks, they were frightened

and flew away. But when the branch passed without doing any harm, most of the ducks returned.

Three or four more branches came in the same way, and at last the ducks, finding there was no danger, no longer flew away, but swam around in careless confidence.

Looking up the stream, the man saw a fox creeping out to a large branch, on which it lay as close as it could. Then that branch, like the others, went down the river.

It floated right into the flock of ducks, and then, all at once, snap! went the fox's jaws, and jumping into the water, it swam off with a plump duck.

THE SEASONS

What does it mean when the bluebird comes

And builds its nest, singing sweet and clear?

When the violets peep through the blades of
grass? —

These are the signs that spring is here.

What does it mean when the berries are ripe?
 When butterflies flit and honeybees hum?
 When cattle stand under the shady trees? —
 These are the signs that summer has come.

What does it mean when the crickets chirp?
 And away to the south the robins steer?
 When apples are falling and leaves are brown? —
 These are the signs that autumn is here.

What does it mean when the days are short?
 When leaves are gone and brooks are dumb?
 When fields are white with drifted snow? —
 These are the signs that winter has come.

The old stars set and the new ones rise,
 The skies that were stormy grow bright and
 clear;
 And so the beautiful, wonderful signs,
 Go round and round through the changing
 year.

—MARY E. HATHAWAY.

Do the duty that lies nearest to thee.



A STORY OF GRANDMA

Grandma was old and bent, and was all alone in the world. Her little brown house was next to the schoolhouse, and she had a smile and a pleasant word for every boy and girl who went by. She was "Grandma" to them all.

Back of Grandma's house was the garden, reaching down to a little river that had great willows on the banks. In this garden Grandma

raised the vegetables she needed for her own use. Besides these there were a few fruit trees — apples and cherries and plums.

In front of the house, and all about it, were flowers — old-fashioned, sweet-smelling kinds. People said that Grandma had only to look at a flower to make it grow.

In summer mornings when the children were going to school, Grandma had flowers for all who wanted them. When her fruit was ripe she shared freely with the young folk, filling their hands when they went trooping home from school.

Besides her house and her garden, Grandma had a barn in which she kept Clover, her gentle, soft-eyed cow. There was a chicken-house, too, and fifty fine chickens in it.

Grandma had very little money, but Clover's milk and the eggs that the chickens gave her helped her very much.

The chickens were her special pets. Grandma took care of them herself. They were so tame that they would fly all about her and eat out of her hand. The school children loved to stand

by the fence to see Grandma feed and pet the chickens. Each chicken of the fifty had a name of its own.

There were Speckle, and Tiny, and Weeny, and Tot; there were Polly, and Toppy, and Fluff; there were Blacky, and Scatter, and Buff. I cannot remember all their names. Each one seemed to know its own name, and when Grandma called, it would run to her as fast as it could.

One morning the children found Grandma in tears. A thief had come in the night and taken all her chickens. Not one of the fifty was left, and Grandma was heartbroken. The children were sorry, too, and went to school feeling very sad for poor Grandma.

Days went by and Grandma still mourned for her lost chickens. But one morning, more than a week after her loss, she saw the yard full of chickens again. She rubbed her glasses. Had all her lost fowls come home like the sheep of little Bo-Peep?

She hurried out to see what it meant. Every chicken had a card tied to one of its legs.

Grandma read on one card, "I have come to take the place of Speckle;" on another, "I have come to take the place of Blacky;" and so on for Tiny, and Polly, and Tot; for Toppy, and Weeny, and Fluff; for Blacky and Buff, and all the rest of the fifty.

Tears came into Grandma's eyes — tears of joy. Who had done this beautiful thing? Who but the school children whom Grandma loved and who loved Grandma!

A VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through
the house,
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
The stockings were hung by the chimney with
care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their
heads.
And mamma in her kerchief, and I in my cap,

Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap —

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters, and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave a lustre of midday to objects below ;
Then what to my wondering eyes should appear
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick !
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled and shouted, and called them by
name.

“ Now, Dasher ! now, Dancer ! now, Prancer and
Vixen !

On, Comet ! on, Cupid ! on, Donner and Blixen !
To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall,
Now, dash away, dash away, dash away all ! ”
As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle mount to the
sky,

So, up to the housetop the coursers they flew,
With a sleigh full of toys — and St. Nicholas, too.
And then in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur from his head to his foot,

And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;

A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a pedler just opening his pack,

His eyes, how they twinkled! his dimples, how merry!

His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry,
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow.

He was chubby and plump — a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself,

A wink of his eye, and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his
work,
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a
jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a
whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of
sight,
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night."

— CLEMENT C. MOORE.

THE WISE MEN OF GOTHAM

One day the people of Gotham heard that the king was coming to visit them. This did not please them at all, for they knew they would have to find food and lodging for him and his followers. More than this, they knew he would take away everything that pleased him.

So they met together and talked the matter over, but could not decide what to do. At last one of the wise men said, "Let us chop down the big trees along the roadside so that he cannot get into the town." This was declared by all to be a splendid plan. So out they went with their axes, and soon all the roads were choked with trees and brush.

When the king came along and saw that the road was blocked, he became very angry.

"Who chopped down these trees?" he asked some country boys.

"The men of Gotham," said they.

"Well, then," said he, "go and tell the men of Gotham that my sheriff shall go into their town just as soon as he can, and cut off their noses."

When the people of Gotham heard this, they were in a great fright. Then one of them who was wiser than the rest made a proposal. He said, "If we can all act as fools when the sheriff comes, I don't think he will hurt us, for nobody ever wished to hurt a fool."

While they were planning foolish things, the

king's men were clearing the roads. But this took such a long time that the king grew tired and went back to London. The sheriff, however, remained behind, and one evening made his way into the town. With him he had a band of fierce-looking soldiers.



When the sheriff came near the town he saw a curious sight. The old men were rolling stones up a hill.

"What are you doing?" said the sheriff.

"We are rolling stones up the hill to make the earth turn round. Then the sun will come up!"

"Well, you are foolish fellows!" said the sheriff. "Don't you know the sun will come up, anyway?"

"Ah, yes! so it will," said they; "we never thought of that. You are a very wise man, surely."

Riding on, he came to a man carrying a big door on his back.

"Where are you going?" he asked.



"I am going away on a visit," he replied.

"But why do you carry that door with you?"

"Well, you see, I left my money at home."

"Then why did you not leave the door at

home, too?"

"Well, you see, the thieves might take my money. But, as I have the door, they cannot break it down to get in."

"You silly fellow!" said the sheriff. "It would be far easier for you to leave the door at home, and take the money with you."



"Well, well," said the man. "So it would. I never thought of that. You are a very wise man."

Next the sheriff met a man in front of a building. He was pulling away at his boot-straps.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"I am trying to lift myself up to the top of the building," the man replied.

"Don't you see that you can never get yourself up that way?" said the sheriff. "You are always shoving down as much as you are pulling up."

"Well, well!" said the man. "I never thought of that before. You must be a wise man to know that much."



A little farther on the sheriff found some men building a stone wall.

"What are you doing here?" he inquired.

"We are building a wall," they said. "There is a pretty lark in this garden, and we do not wish him to get away."

"You foolish people!" said the sheriff. "Do

you not know that the lark will fly over the wall just as soon as you build it?"

"Ah, indeed!" said the builders. "So it will. Now, we never thought of that."

And wherever the sheriff went he found the people doing something foolish. So he went back to the king, and told him what a lot of fools he found in Gotham.

"Leave them alone, then," said the king. "If they are such fools as that, they may keep their noses. Some day I shall go down and have a look at them."

WYNKEN, BLYNKEN, AND NOD

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night

Sailed off in a wooden shoe, —

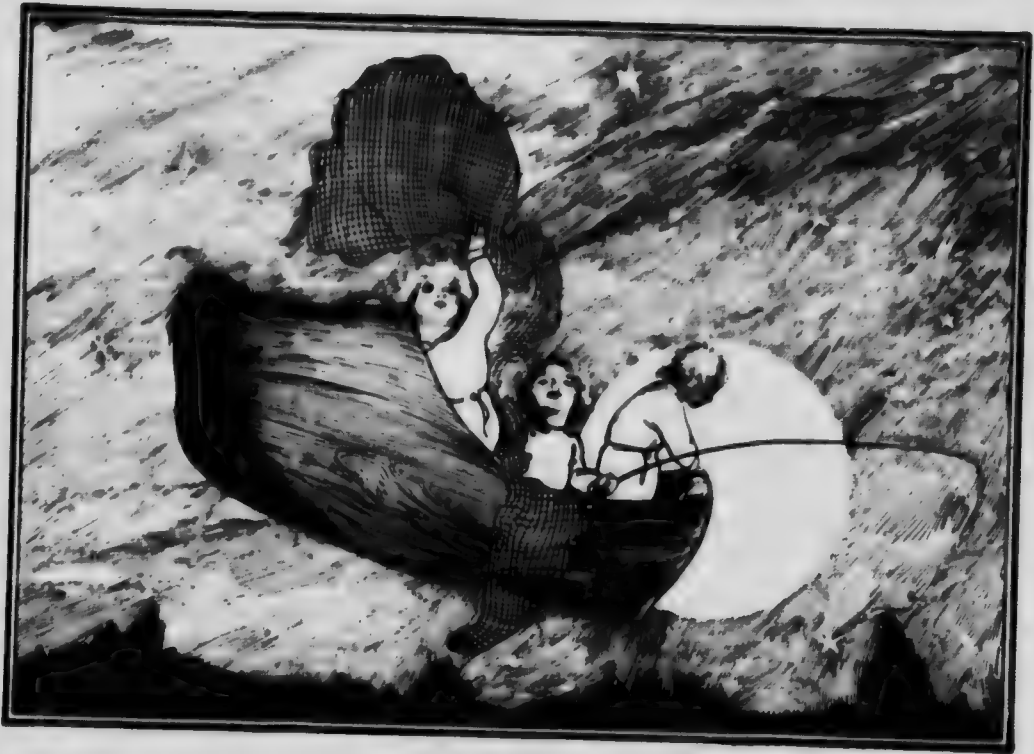
Sailed on a river of misty light

Into a sea of dew.

"Where are you going, and what do you wish?"

The old moon asked the three.

"We have come to fish for the herring-fish



That live in this beautiful sea ;
Nets of silver and gold have we,"
Said Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

The old moon laughed and sung a song,
As they rocked in the wooden shoe ;
And the wind that sped them all night long
Ruffled the waves of dew ;
The little stars were the herring-fish

That lived in the beautiful sea.

"Now cast your nets wherever you wish,
But never afraid are we!"

So cried the stars to the fishermen three:

Wynken,

Blynken,

And Nod.

All night long their nets they threw

For the fish in the twinkling of an,

Then down from the sky came the wooden shoe,
Bringing the fishermen home;

'Twas all so pretty a sail, it seemed

As if it could not be;

And some folk thought 'twas a dream they'd
dreamed,

Of sailing that beautiful sea;

But I shall name you the fishermen three:

Wynken,

Blynken,

And Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes,
And Nod is a little head,

And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies
Is a wee one's trundle-bed ;
So shut your eyes while Mother sings
Of wonderful sights that be,
And you shall see the beautiful things
As you rock on the misty sea
Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three:
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

— EUGENE FIELD.

From "With Trumpet and Drum"; copyright, 1893, by Mary French Field; published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

THE SONG OF THE WHEAT

Back of the bread is the snowy flour;
 Back of the flour is the mill;
Back of the mill the growing wheat
 Nods on the breezy hill;
Over the wheat is the glowing sun
 Ripening the heart of the grain;
Above the sun is the gracious God,
 Sending the sunlight and rain.

SNOWFLAKES

Out of the sky they come,
Wandering down the air,
Some to the roofs, and some
Whiten the branches bare ;

Some in the empty nest,
Some on the ground below,
Until the world is dressed
All in a gown of snow ;

Dressed in a fleecy gown
Out of the snowflakes spun ;
Wearing a golden crown,
Over her head the sun.

Out of the sky again
Ghosts of the flowers that died
Visit the earth, and then
Under the white drifts hide.

By permission of Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

—FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN.

Little by little all tasks are done ;
So are the crowns of the faithful won.



THE GREAT BEAR

"Mother, listen to what I am going to tell you. Last night Charlie Black asked me if I knew where Charles's Wain is. I said, 'No, I never heard of it.' What do you think he showed me, but the seven stars? I told him he was wrong, because that is the Big Dipper.

" 'Well,' said he, 'Charles's Wain is what my mother always calls it.'

"Don't you think, Mother, that Charles's Wain is a queer name for the Big Dipper?"

"No, my boy, Wain means wagon, and one way you may look at the Big Dipper, it does look like a wagon. To the old Greeks it looked like part of an animal and they called it the Great Bear."

"O Mother, is there a story about the Great Bear like the Greek story of the Giant with the three stars in his belt?"

"Yes, my son; I am glad you have asked me, for I intended to tell it to you some time.

"Near a fine city there once was a large forest. The trees were very tall, and their branches were so thick that they made a high roof. Under this roof one might ride for miles and miles without seeing a house, or a living creature except birds and wild animals.

"One day a hunter who had ridden far into this forest came back and told that he had seen a beautiful snow-white bear. No one in that city had ever heard before of a snow-white bear, so all the hunters began to wonder whose prize would be the snow-white skin.

"One of the bravest of the hunters said, 'I shall go to the heart of the forest, and I shall never come back without the snow-white skin.'

"This young man's father had died when he was an infant, and when he was five years old his mother was taken away, no one knew how

or where. When he grew up he went to all the fields and forests and mountains in search of his mother. So he did not fear to go alone to the heart of the great forest where the snow-white bear lived.

"The brave young man, often thinking of his mother, rode on and on, hoping to get a glimpse of the snow-white bear. He carried a ready arrow in his bow. Happening to see a very strange bird, he kept his eye on it that he might bring it down with his arrow.

"At last, just as his arrow left the string, his horse reared and nearly threw him off. There in front of him stood the snow-white bear. Its two fore-paws were held out towards him, and its eyes seemed full of the love he remembered in his mother's face. 'O my mother, I shall live with you forever,' and he clasped his arms about the snow-white bear's neck.

"The arrow carried this cry up to Jupiter. The son's prayer was answered, for Jupiter kindly changed the brave, strong hunter into the Great Bear, and helped him to guide his

mother, the Little Bear, to her home among the stars.

"Now he guards her forever, and points to the North Star which she keeps. This is to show the world the duty and love of son and mother."

A THOUGHT AND A DEED

A little spring had lost its way
Amid the grass and fern ;
A passing stranger scooped a well
Where weary men might turn.

He walled it in, and hung with care
A ladle at its brink ;
He thought not of the deed he did,
But judged that toil might drink.

He passed again, and lo ! the well,
By summers never dried,
Had cooled ten thousand parching tongues,
And saved a life beside.

—CHARLES MACKAY.

SEVEN TIMES ONE



There's no dew left on the
daisies and clover,
There's no rain left in
heaven ;
I've said my "seven times"
over and over,
Seven times one are
seven.

I am old, so old I can write a letter ;
My birthday lessons are done ;
The lambs play always, they know no better,
They are only one times one.

O Moon ! in the night I have seen you sailing
And shining so round and low ;
You were bright, ah bright, but your light is
failing,
You are nothing now but a bow.

You Moon, have you done something wrong
in heaven,
That God has hidden your face ?



From painting by Carter

LITTLE FOXES

I hope if you have you will soon be forgiven,
And shine again in your place.

O velvet bee, you're a dusty fellow ;
You've powdered your legs with gold !
O brave marsh Mary-buds, rich and yellow,
Give me your money to hold !

O columbine, open your
folded wrapper,
Where two twin turtle-
doves dwell !
O cuckoo-pint, toll me the
purple clapper
That hangs in your clear
green bell !



And show me your nest with the young ones
in it, —
I will not steal it away ;
I am old, you may trust me, linnet, linnet, —
I am seven times one to-day.

A LEAK IN THE DIKE



Many years ago there lived
in Holland a brave, happy
little boy whose name was

Peter.

Peter's father was a sluicer,
that is, a man who watched the
sluices, or gates, in the dikes and opened
and closed them for the ships to pass
out of the canals into the great sea.

Even the little children were taught that the
dikes must be watched every moment, and that a
hole no larger than your little finger was a very
dangerous thing.

One lovely afternoon in the early fall, when

Peter was eight years old, his mother called him from his play. "Come, Peter," she said, "I wish you to go across the dike and take these cakes to your friend, the blind man. If you go quickly, and do not stop to play, you will be home again before it is dark."

The little boy was glad to go on such an errand, and set out with a light heart. He stayed with the poor blind man a little while to tell him about his walk along the dike; of the sun and the flowers and the ships far out at sea. Then he remembered his mother's wish that he should return before dark, and bidding his friend "Good-bye," he set out for home.

As he walked beside the canal, he noticed how the rains had swollen the waters, and he thought of his father's gates.

"I am glad they are so strong," he said to himself. "If they gave way, what would become of us? These pretty fields would be covered with water. Father always calls them the 'angry waters.' I suppose he thinks they are angry at him for keeping them out so long."

As he walked along he sometimes stopped to pick the pretty blue flowers that grew beside the road, or to listen to the rabbits' soft tread as they rustled through the grass. But oftener he smiled as he thought of his visit to the poor blind man who had so few pleasures and was always so glad to have him come.

Suddenly he noticed that the sun was setting, and that it was growing dark. "Mother will be watching for me," he thought, and he began to run toward home.

Just then he heard a noise. It was the sound of trickling water! He stopped and looked down. There was a small hole in the dike, through which a tiny stream was flowing.

Any child in Holland is frightened at the thought of a leak in the dike, so that Peter understood the danger at once. If the water ran through a little hole, it would soon make a larger one, and the whole country would be flooded. In a moment he saw what he must do. Throwing away his flowers, he climbed down the side of the dike and thrust his finger into the tiny hole.

The flowing of the water was stopped!

"Oho!" he said to himself. "The angry waters must stay back now. I can keep them back with my finger. Holland shall not be drowned while I am here."

This was all very well at first, but it soon grew dark and cold. The little fellow shouted and screamed. "Come here; come here," he called; but no one heard him; no one came to help him.

It grew still colder, and his arm ached, and began to grow stiff and numb. He shouted again, "Will no one come? Mother! Mother!"

But his mother had looked anxiously along the dike road many times since sunset for her little boy, and now she had closed and locked the cot-



tage door, thinking that Peter was spending the night with his blind friend, and that she would scold him in the morning for staying away from home without her permission.

Peter tried to whistle, but his teeth chattered with the cold. He thought of his brother and sister in their warm beds, and of his dear father and mother. "I must not let them be drowned," he thought. "I must stay here until some one comes, if I have to stay all night."

The moon and stars looked down on the child crouching on a stone on the side of the dike. His head was bent, and his eyes were closed, but he was not asleep, for every now and then he rubbed the hand that was holding back the angry sea.

In the early morning, a laborer going to his work thought he heard a groan, as he walked along on the top of the dike. Bending down he saw the child and called to him: "What is the matter, boy? Are you hurt? Why are you sitting there?"

"I am keeping the water from running in," was the answer of the little hero. "Tell them to come quickly."



THE SCARECROW

The farmer looked at his cherry tree,
With thick buds clustered on every bough ;
“ I wish I could beat the Robins,” said he,
“ If somebody would only show me how !
“ I’ll make a terrible scarecrow grim,
With threatening arms and with bristling head,
And up in the trees I’ll fasten him
To frighten them half to death,” he said.
He fashioned a scarecrow, tattered and torn —
Oh ! ’twas a horrible thing to see !

And very early, one summer morn,
He set it up in his cherry tree.

The blossoms were white as the light sea-foam,
The beautiful tree was a lovely sight,
But the scarecrow stood there so much at home
All the birds flew screaming away in a fright.

The Robins, who watched him every day,
Heads held aslant, keen eyes so bright!
Surveying the monster began to say,
“Why should this monster our prospects blight?”

“He never moves round for the roughest weather,
He’s a harmless, comical, tough old fellow;
Let’s all go into the tree together,
For he won’t budge till the fruit is mellow!”

So up they flew and the sauciest pair
’Mid the shady branches peered and perked,
Selected a spot with the utmost care,
And all day merrily sang and worked.

And where do you think they built their nest?
In the scarecrow’s pocket, if you please,

That, half concealed on his ragged breast,
Made a charming covert of safety and ease.

By the time the cherries were ruby red,
A thriving family, hungry and brisk,
The whole day long on the ripe fruit fed,
'Twas so convenient! They ran no risk!

Until the children were ready to fly,
All undisturbed they lived in the tree,
For nobody thought to look in the guy
For a Robin's flourishing family.

— CELIA THAXTER.

THE LOST CAMEL

A dervish was travelling alone in the desert,
when he met two merchants.

"You have lost a camel," said he to the merchants.

"Indeed we have," they replied.

"Was he not blind in his right eye, and lame
in his left leg?" asked the dervish.

"He was," replied the merchants.

"Had he lost a front tooth?" asked the dervish.

"He had," answered the merchants.

"And was he not laden with honey on one side, and corn on the other?"

"Most certainly he was," they rejoined. "And as you have seen him so lately, you can, of course, lead us to him."

"My friends," the dervish said, "I have never seen your camel, nor have I heard of him, except through yourselves."

"A pretty story, truly!" cried the merchants. "You must have seen him. And where are the jewels which formed a part of his burden?"

"I have never seen your camel nor your jewels," repeated the dervish.

Upon this they seized him and took him to the cadì, to be judged; but, on the strictest search, nothing could be found against him. Nothing was found to prove him guilty of either falsehood or theft.

"He is a magician!" exclaimed the merchants. But the dervish calmly said to the cadì:—

"I see that you are surprised, and that you believe that I am deceiving you. Perhaps I have given you cause for such belief.

"I have lived long and alone in the desert, but I have learned to see and to think.

"I knew that I had crossed the track of a camel that had strayed from its owner, because I saw its footprints, but no trace of a human being. I knew the animal was blind in one eye because it had cropped the herbage on only one side of the path. And I knew it was lame in one leg, because one foot had made but a faint impression upon the sand.

"I also knew that the animal had lost one tooth, because, wherever it had grazed, a small tuft of grass in the centre of its bite was left untouched. I knew that which formed the burden of the beast, for the busy ants told me that it was corn on the one side, and the clustering flies that it was honey on the other."

The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

THE BEAR AND THE BEES

Some bears, going out for a walk one day,
Discovered in one of the trees
A hive full of honey, which smelt very fine,
So they stopped to make friends with the
bees.

The old bear bowed low, and said, "Brum, Brum ;"
And the lady bee answered, "Hum, Hum, Hum."

"Madame Bee," said the bear to the fair little
queen,

"Yourself I am happy to meet !

I hope you'll invite me to share your feast,

I'm exceedingly fond of what's sweet !"

And he tried to smile with his "Brum, Brum,
Brum ;"

But the bees all frowned with their "Hum, Hum,
Hum."

Then the queen bee haughtily raised her head,

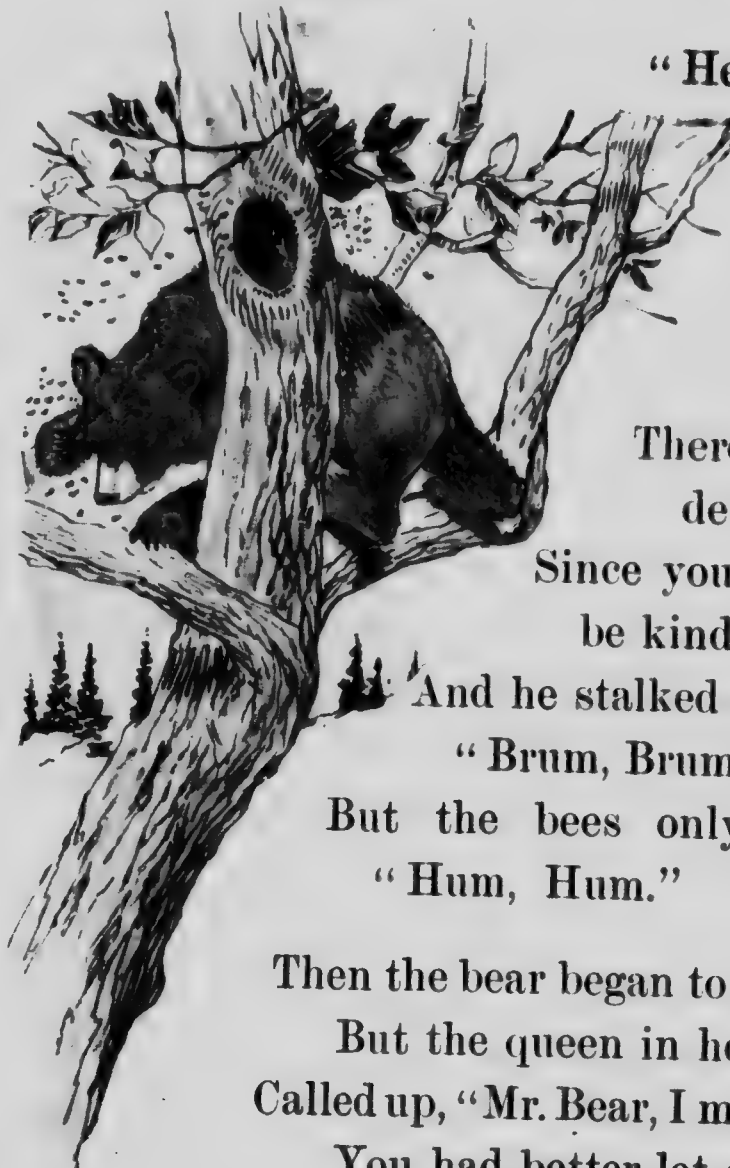
As she sat on her leafy throne,

And said, "Mr. Bear, as you very well know,

We bees prefer dining alone !"

Then the bear looked cross and grunted, "Brum,
Brum ;"

But the bees all smiled and applauded, "Hum,
Hum."



"Heigh-ho, Mrs. Bee,"
said the angry
bear,

"You will please
to bear this in
mind,

There is nothing to hin-
der my taking it *all*

Since you do not choose to
be kind !"

And he stalked about with a loud
"Brum, Brum ;"

But the bees only laughed a low
"Hum, Hum."

Then the bear began to climb up the tree ;
But the queen in her firmest tone,
Called up, "Mr. Bear, I must warn you now,
You had better let *us* alone —

We are fully armed ;" but the bear sneered,
" Brum ! "

And the bees all savagely buzzed, " Hum, Hum ! "

The soldier bees drew out their sharp, keen
knives ;

While the little bees giggled with glee,
" Oh, what a sore nose you will have, Mr. Bear,
When you scramble down out of this tree ! "
But the bear glared in rage while he growled,
" Brum, Brum, "

And the sturdy young bees piped a saucy " Hum,
Hum. "

Nearer he crept to the coveted prize ;

But that prize he was never to gain,
For the knives pierced his nose, and his ears,
and his eyes,

Till he howled with the smart and the pain ;
Down he went to the ground with a sad " Brum,
Brum, "

While the bees in their triumph sang, " Hum, Hum,
Hum ! "



"Now then, Mr. Bear," said the sage little queen,

"If you would be healthy and wise,
You must learn not to think quite so much of
yourself,

And all others you must not despise;"
And the bear marched off with a sullen "Brum,
Brum,"

While the busy bees buzzed with a pleasant
"Hum, Hum."

A LIGHT-BRINGER

In a part of Scotland where the hills are rugged and the deep sea beats wildly against the shore, there lived a little boy whose name, Robert Louis Stevenson, you have already seen. He played with the shells on the shore, he watched the sea-birds fly screaming over his head, he listened to the music of the waves, and he often gazed at the wonderful light in the big lighthouse on the rocky point farthest out in the sea.

The lighthouse had been built there by his grandfather, and here and there along the coast were many other lighthouses built or planned by the little boy's father or his grandfather.

"What will you be, Robert, when you grow up?" he was often asked; and he always proudly answered, "I shall build lighthouses for people to see the light."

His heart and his mind planned great things, but his body was not strong; his whole life was a struggle with weakness and disease, and yet he built lighthouses for all the world to see.

Even as a boy he had to spend days and weeks in his bed, and when he grew tired of playing with his soldiers and horses and other toys, he made up stories about the shapes in the fire and the shadows on the wall. "In the night," said he, "the 'Brownies' come to me and tell me wonderful stories." So he turned even his sufferings to cheerful use.

When he grew to be a young man he did study to build lighthouses of stone and steel and glass, like those his father had built, but as his mind grew stronger his body seemed to grow weaker. Many a day, as when he was a boy, he lay on his couch, seeing wonderful sights and writing them down for other people to see.

His visions brought happiness into his own life, and they have brought light and brightness into the lives of many others. He wrote many stories and poems, and these have given pleasure to boys and girls as well as to older people. So after all we may say that, even in his bed of sickness, Robert Louis Stevenson did build lighthouses for all the world to see.

A BOY'S SONG

Where the pools are bright and deep,
Where the gray trout lies asleep,
Up the river and o'er the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

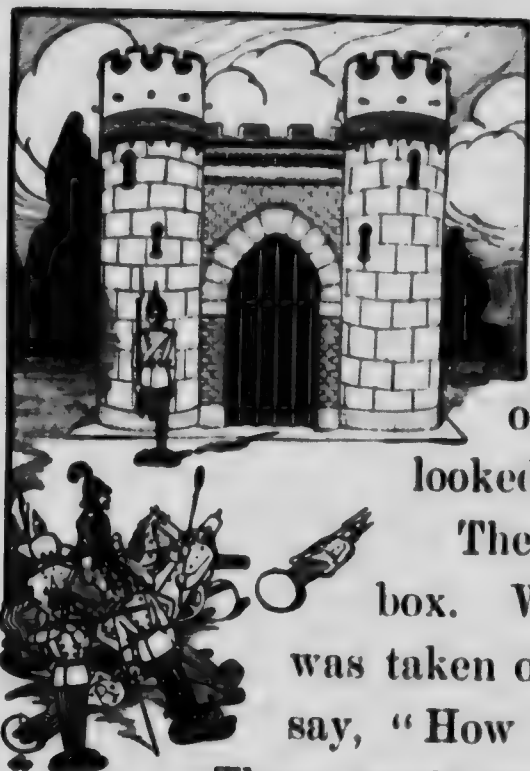
Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thick and greenest;
There to trace the homeward bee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadow falls the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free,
That's the way for Billy and me.

—JAMES HOGG.

Life's field will yield as we make it,
A harvest of thorns or of flowers.

THE TIN SOLDIER



Once upon a time an old tin spoon was made into twenty-five tin soldiers. They were all dressed alike in red and blue. Each

of them had a gun, and looked straight in front of him.

These soldiers lived in a box. When the lid of the box was taken off, they heard some one say, "How splendid!"

These words were spoken by a little boy to whom the box had been given on his birthday.

He took the soldiers out, one by one, and set them upon the table in a row. The boy was very proud of the soldiers, and said, "This is my army, and I am the general."

All the soldiers were alike but one, and he had only one leg. When the soldiers were being made, his turn had come last, and there was not

enough tin to finish him. So he had to stand on one leg, while the others stood on two.

But though this little soldier had only one leg, he was very bold. "I am sure," he said, "that I shall not run away when the peas begin to come thick and fast from the big guns. I shall stand my ground until I am shot."

But, alas! the brave little fellow never saw the battle at all. The boy looked at him and said, "Oh! you are of no use; you have only one leg. You will have to take care of the camp while the others fight." Then he put the one-legged soldier in front of a cardboard castle, and the battle began.

Are you not sorry for the poor little tin soldier? He was very sorry for himself, and I think he would have cried if he had not known that no real soldier would do that.

Instead of crying, he said to himself, "Never mind; if I cannot fight in the battle, I can do my best to keep this camp safe." So he held up his head and tried to do his duty.

When the battle was over, the boy put the

soldiers back into the box. He quite forgot the one-legged soldier, who stood all night long keeping watch at the door of the castle.

Next morning some little children came into the room to play. They took the tin soldier away from his post and placed him against the window.

Soon a servant came into the room and lifted up the window. Down went the little soldier, head over heels. He fell a long way down into the street.

It was a very bad fall. His helmet and gun stuck fast between two stones, so that he could not move. He looked funnier than ever, standing on his head, with his one leg in the air.

Soon the boy came to look for him, but he could not find him. Once he came so near that the little soldier was nearly crushed under his foot.

If he had only called out, "Here I am," the boy would have seen him, but the tin soldier was too proud to call for help.

Soon it began to rain, patter, pitter, patter, until there was a very heavy shower, and the gutters were all filled with water. The poor little

soldier was wet to the skin, but he did not grumble.

Just then two little boys came along the street. One cried, "Oh, here is a tin soldier; let us give him a sail!"



They made a paper boat, and put our poor friend in it. Then they sent it sailing down the gutter, and ran along clapping their hands to see it go so fast.

Dear me! how big the waves were in the gutter, and how fast the water ran along! The paper boat rocked to and fro until the tin soldier began to feel unwell. He was a soldier, you see, not a sailor.

Though the little soldier was in danger, he did not show any fear. He had his gun, and he still looked straight in front of him.

At last the boat rushed under a stone bridge which led into a drain, where it was very dark.

"I am done for now," thought the tin soldier.
"Never mind, I shall die bravely."

As he sailed along in the dark drain, a big rat called out in a fierce voice, "What are you doing here?" But the tin soldier only held his gun more firmly than before.

The paper boat rushed along at a great rate, and the rat ran after it. He cried out to the bits of wood and straw: "Stop that tin soldier, stop him! He has run away from the army."

The tin soldier was very angry when he heard that, but he could not stop to tell the rat why he was running away.

The stream ran on faster and faster. Far away in front the little soldier could see a light. This was the place where the drain came to an end. Then he heard a loud noise which would have made any one but our brave tin soldier afraid.

At the end of the drain the water fell over a steep place into a deep pool.

The boat rushed over this steep place and was filled with water. It sank down, down, until the water was up to the tin soldier's neck.

Even now the little tin soldier was not afraid. He did not wink an eye, but held himself as straight as he could. At last the paper boat broke up, and the soldier sank in the water.

Just as he was sinking, a large fish opened his mouth and swallowed him up. Oh, it was dark inside the fish, — much darker than in the drain, — and it was so narrow that he could not move.

But the tin soldier felt no fear. He lay quite still, holding his gun.

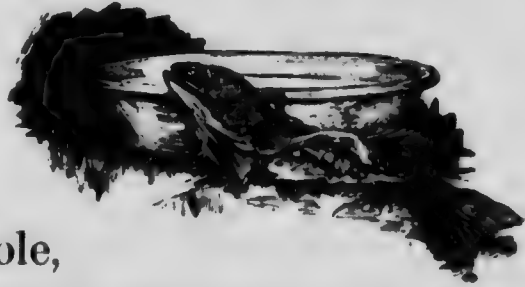
The fish swallowed something more. It swam round and round, in a great hurry, and then sprang out of the water and lay quite still.

“What is going on now?” said the little soldier. “This is all very strange.”

A long time went by, and our little friend felt that he was being carried from one place to another. But at last there was a flash of light, and some one cried, “Here is my one-legged soldier!”

What do you think had happened? The fish had been caught on a hook and taken to market. It had been bought by the cook of the house in which the boy lived.

Everybody in the house wished to see the little man again who had lived inside a fish, and had gone through so many dangers. But the little soldier did not feel a bit proud.



They put him on a table, and, strange to say, he found himself in the same room where he had been set to mind the castle.

There was the same boy, and there were the same children, and on the table were the same tin soldiers and the same toy castle. Was it not strange?

The boy picked up the tin soldier, and said: "Your paint is washed off, and you are bent in the back, but you are a brave little fellow all the same. I shall give you a little sword, and you shall be captain of the castle."

Then the little soldier's heart jumped for joy, and his eyes filled with tears. Through all his dangers he had tried to be brave and to do his duty, and at last he had won his reward.

— Adapted from HANS ANDERSEN.

A LAUGHING CHORUS

Oh, such a commotion under the earth
 When March called, "Ho, there! ho!"
Such spreading of rootlets far and wide,
Such whispering to and fro.
And, "Are you ready?" the Snowdrop asked,
 "'Tis time to start, you know."
 "Almost, my dear," the Scilla replied;
 "I'll follow as soon as you go."
Then "Ha! ha! ha!" a chorus came,
 Of laughter soft and low,
From the millions of flowers under the ground —
Yes — millions — beginning to grow.

"I'll promise my blossoms," the Crocus said,
 " When I hear the bluebirds sing."
And straight thereafter, Narcissus cried,
"My silver and gold I'll bring."
"And ere they are dulled," another spoke,
"The Hyacinth bells shall ring,"
And the Violet only murmured, "I'm here,"
And sweet grew the air of spring.

Then "Ha! ha! ha!" a chorus came,
Of laughter soft and low,
From the millions of flowers under the ground —
Yes — millions — beginning to grow.

Oh, the pretty, brave things! through the coldest
days

Imprisoned in walls of brown,
They never lost heart though the blast shrieked
loud,

And the sleet and the hail came down;
But patiently each wrought her beautiful dress,
Or fashioned her beautiful crown;
And now they are coming to brighten the world,
Still shadowed by winter's frown;
And well may they cheerily laugh, "Ha! ha!
ha!"

In a chorus soft and low.
The millions of flowers hid under the ground —
Yes — millions — beginning to grow.

Politeness is to do or say
The kindest thing in the kindest way.

THE WOODMAN'S AXE

Many years ago in a distant country, an honest woodman lived with his wife and children in a small house in the woods. He was very poor, — so poor that he had to work from early morning until late in the evening in order to keep his family from starving.

One day as the woodman was working on the bank of a stream, his axe slipped from his hand and fell into the water. "Ah, me!" he cried, "it was very hard to get my living with my axe, but what shall I do now that it is gone?" And he hid his face in his hands and sighed deeply.

Then he was aware of a bright light, and he heard a sweet voice that said, "Look up, my friend; why do you mourn so bitterly?"

"I have just lost my axe," said the woodman; "the axe that I depend upon to get a living for my family. I have not money to buy another."

Now you must know that it was the water-

fairy who spoke to the woodman. No sooner had he finished his speech than the fairy was gone. Down she went to the bottom of the river, but immediately returned, bearing in her hand an axe of gold.

"Is this your axe?" she asked. But the woodman shook his head. "No, no! My axe was not so fine as that. That would buy many of mine; it is not mine."

Then the fairy sank beneath the water again. In a moment she reappeared, bearing a silver axe. "Is this yours?" she asked again. "No, no!" said the woodman; "that is much finer than mine. Mine was made of iron."

Then the fairy went down once more, and when she came back she carried in her arms the woodman's axe. "That is it!" he cried. "That is it!" "Yes," said the fairy, "this is the axe with which you earn the bread to feed your hungry children. Honest woodman, the silver axe and the gold axe shall both be yours." The woodman thanked the fairy, and hurried home to show his treasures to his family.

On the way he met a lazy neighbor. "Good day!" said the neighbor; "where did you get those fine axes?" The truthful woodman told him the whole story.

For once the lazy man hurried to the river. Down went his axe into the water, and loudly he cried for help. The water-fairy came and asked him the cause of his weeping. "I have lost my axe," he said; "I have lost my good axe."

The fairy sank beneath the water. Soon she brought up an axe of gold. "Is this your axe?" she asked. "Yes, oh yes!" he cried greedily, "that is my axe. Thank you very much."

"You dishonest rogue!" said the fairy, "this is my axe, not yours. I shall take it home with me, but you must dive for your own if you wish to get it."

Whichever way the wind doth blow,

Some heart is glad to have it so.

Then blow it east or blow it west,

The wind that blows, that wind is best.



LITTLE SORROW

Among the thistles on the hill,

In tears sat Little Sorrow :

"I see a black cloud in the west ;

'Twill bring a storm to-morrow.

And when it storms, where shall I be ?

And what will keep the rain from me ?

Woe's me ! " said Little Sorrow.

"But now the air is soft and sweet,

The sunshine bright," said Pleasure ;

"Here is my pipe ; if you will dance,

I'll wake my merriest measure ;

Or, if you choose, we'll sit beneath

The red-rose tree, and twine a wreath,

Come, come with me ! " said Pleasure.

"Oh, I want neither dance nor flower—
They're not for me," said Sorrow,
"When that black cloud is in the west,
And it will storm to-morrow!
And if it storm, what shall I do?
I have no heart to play with you—
Go! go!" said Little Sorrow.

But lo! when came the morrow's morn,
The clouds were all blown over;
The lark sprang singing from his nest
Among the dewy clover;
And Pleasure called: "Come out and dance
To-day you mourn no evil chance;
The clouds have all blown over!"

"And if they have, alas, alas!
Poor comfort that!" said Sorrow;
"For if to-day we miss the storm,
'Twill surely come to-morrow,
And be the fiercer for delay;
I am too sore at heart to play—
Woe's me!" said Little Sorrow.

— ANNIE D. GREEN.



From painting by Mme. Honner

A FASCINATING TAIL

THE GOLDEN TOUCH



ONCE upon a time there lived a very rich king whose name was Midas. He was very fond of gold. Indeed, he loved it more than anything else in the world, except his beautiful little daughter whom he called Marygold.

When Marygold picked buttercups and dandelions, and brought them to him, he would say, "I wish these flowers were as golden as they look."

One day when King Midas was in his treasure room counting his bags and boxes of money, he looked up and saw a stranger in the room.

"You are a rich man, King Midas," said the stranger.

"Yes, I have some gold here," answered Midas, "but not nearly enough."

"What!" cried the stranger. "Are you not satisfied? What more do you wish?"

King Midas looked intently at the stranger and said, "I wish that I had the Golden Touch."

"Are you sure that you would be satisfied then?"



"Oh, yes!" answered Midas. "I would ask for nothing more."

"It shall be as you wish," said the stranger. "To-morrow at sunrise you shall have the Golden Touch."

When the sun peeped into the room, King Midas jumped out of bed. He touched a chair; it turned to gold. He touched the bed and the table, and they were changed to solid, shining gold. He dressed himself, and all his clothes were gold. Then King Midas went into his garden. "Now," he thought, "I can have the most beautiful garden in the world." So he touched the leaves and flowers, and they, too, became shining gold.

When the king had done this, he felt hungry and thirsty, so he went to the palace for his breakfast.

Seated at his golden table, he asked first for a glass of water. When the water touched his lips, it changed to gold. He touched the fish on his plate; it became a pretty gold fish, and he could not eat it. He took an egg; that, too, turned into gold.

"Good morning, dear father," cried Marygold, as she ran to put her arms about his neck and give him a morning kiss.

The king kissed his little daughter. "My dear

little Marygold," he cried. But Marygold did not answer.

Alas! What had he done? His dear daughter, his sweet little Marygold, was changed to gold by his kiss.

Midas was overcome with grief and horror. He went back to his strong treasure room and shut himself in.

But now he found no joy in his golden money. The sight of it only made him weep the harder. "Unhappy, that I am," he cried out, "the Golden Touch has made me a miserable man."

Just then the same stranger stood before him.

"Which do you think," asked he, "is worth more — the Golden Touch or a cup of water?"

"A cup of water!" cried the king.



"The Golden Touch or a crust of bread?"

"Give me a crust of bread," answered the king.

"The Golden Touch or your dear little Marygold?"

"Oh, my child!" cried Midas. "She is worth more to me than all the gold in the world."

"Now go to your bed," said the stranger, "and sleep till daylight."

Midas slept late the next morning. On awakening, he dressed hastily and walked out of his chamber. How his heart bounded when he saw his little Marygold come running to greet him. He walked with her in the garden, and rejoiced in the beauty and the fragrance of the flowers.

Was the Golden Touch only a hateful dream? At any rate, after this King Midas loved gold far less. He was kind to the poor and the sick, and he helped his people in many ways.

His people all became happy and prosperous, and that made Midas prosperous, too. Indeed, it came to be a common saying, "King Midas has the Golden Touch, for everything he and his people lay hand upon is sure to prosper."

THE LAND OF NOD

Come, cuddle your head on my shoulder, dear,
Your head like the golden-rod,
And we shall go sailing away from here
To the beautiful Land of Nod.

Away from Life's hurry and worry and flurry,
Away from earth's shadow and gloom
To a world of fair weather, we'll float off together
Where roses are always in bloom.

Just shut up your eyes and fold your hands,
Your hands like the leaves of a rose,
And we will go sailing to those fair lands
That never an atlas shows.

On the north and the west they are bounded by
rest,

On the south and the east by dreams;
'Tis the country ideal, where nothing is real,
But everything only seems.

Just drop down the curtains of your dear eyes,
Those eyes like a bright bluebell,
And we will sail out under star-lit skies
To the land where the fairies dwell.

Down the river of Sleep our barge will sweep,
Till it reaches that mystic isle
Which no man has seen, but where all have
been,
And there we will pause awhile.

I will croon you a song as we float along
To that shore which is blessed of God,
Then ho! for that fair land, we're off to that rare
land,
That beautiful Land of Nod.

— ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

Honey bee, honey bee, where are you going?
To fill my basket with precious pelf,
To toil for my neighbor as well as myself,
To find out the sweetest flower that grows,
Be it a thistle or be it a rose, —
A secret worth the knowing.

THE LARK AND HER LITTLE ONES



ONE spring a lark built her nest in a field of grain. She laid five speckled eggs in the nest. Soon there were five little birds to be fed.

The mother bird flew about all day, looking for food for her babies. They grew very fast, and the grain grew fast, too. It was ripe and ready to be cut, but the larks were not strong enough to fly.

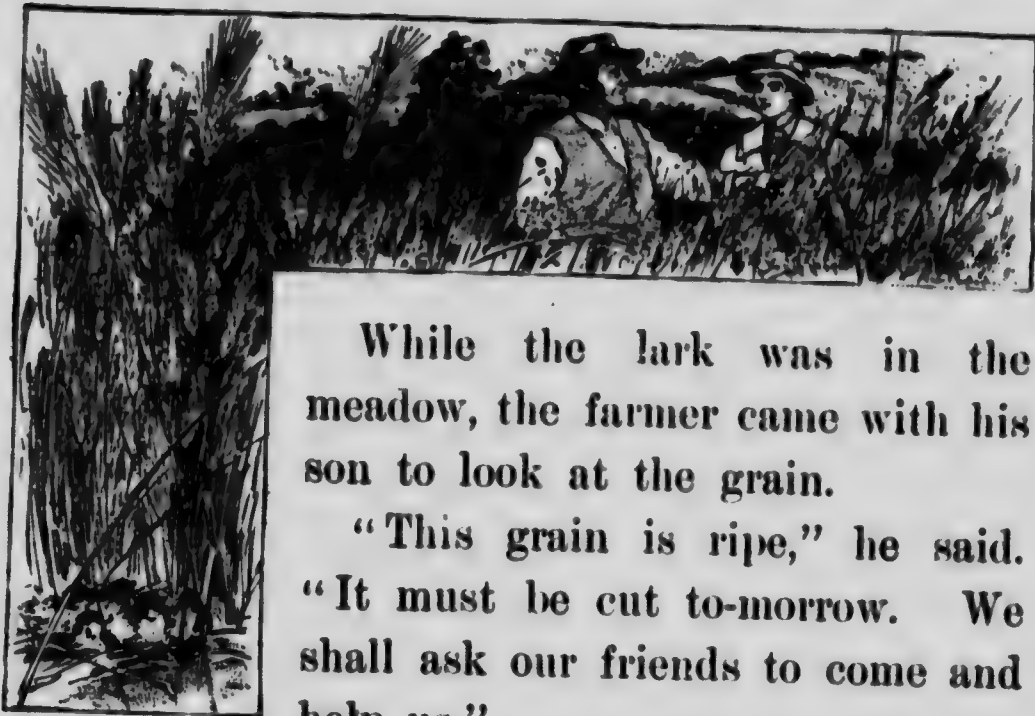
One morning the mother bird was going to the meadow to find some food for her little ones. Before she went she said, "The farmer may come to this field to-day. If he does, do not forget what he says. You must not go to sleep while I am gone."

Then she spread her wings and flew away. The little ones were very careful not to go to sleep.



From painting by Holmen

"KISS ME"



While the lark was in the meadow, the farmer came with his son to look at the grain.

"This grain is ripe," he said. "It must be cut to-morrow. We shall ask our friends to come and help us."

When the lark came home, the little ones cried: "O, Mother, Mother! the farmer came while you were away. He is going to cut the grain to-morrow. He says that he will ask his friends to help him. What shall we do? What shall we do? We are not strong enough to fly."

"Do not be afraid, children. The farmer's friends will not come to help him. We need not fly away to-day."

The next day the farmer and his son came again to the field. The little larks heard him

say, "This grain must be cut. Where are our friends? We asked them to help us. Why are they not here? We shall ask our cousins to help us to-morrow."

Soon the lark came home.

"O, Mother, Mother!" cried the young ones. "We must fly away now. The farmer says that he will ask his cousins to help him cut his ripe grain."

"Do not be afraid," said the mother bird. "We do not need to fly away. The farmer's friends did not come to-day. His cousins will not come to-morrow."

The farmer and his son came to the field in the morning. They waited and waited, but the cousins did not come. At last the farmer could wait no longer.

"My son," he said, "this grain must be cut. To-morrow I shall cut it myself, and you may help me."

"O, Mother, Mother!" cried the young larks. "We must fly away now. The farmer is coming in the morning to do the work himself."

"Yes," said the mother bird, "we must fly away now. The grain will be cut to-morrow. Come with me to the meadow."

The little larks spread their wings and flew away from their nest in the field of grain. The next morning when the farmer cut the grain he found the empty nest on the ground. The lark and her little ones sang their morning song in the sunny meadow.



THE MISSION OF A ROSE

Only a rosebud kissed by the dew,
Out in a garden fair it grew,
Loved by the sunshine, wooed by the wind,
Yet to be out in the world it pined.

Roses around it had gone away,
Here all alone it was doomed to stay ;
“ Ah ! ” said the rosebud, “ could I go, too,
Some loving work in the world to do ! ”

One summer morn came a maiden there,
Seeking a flower, a flower to wear ;
Spied out the bud, amid green leaves curled,
Gathered and bore it out in the world.
There in her simple dress it lay,
Hearing her heart beat all the day,
“ Ah ! ” said the rosebud, “ now let me break
Into a rose, for her sweet sake.”

But yet as a bud it was given away ;
A sick child saw it from where she lay,
It brought to the pale sad face a smile,
Pain was forgotten just for a while.
“ Now,” said the rosebud, “ let me bloom ; ”
And its fragrance floated across the room.
The bud was a rose at dawn of day,
But the soul of the child had passed away.

AN ANT-HILL

Ants live in nests made in the earth. We call these nests ant-hills from the shape of the part



above ground. It is the mother ant that begins to build the nest. She works at the nest-making until enough young ants grow up to do all the work; then she leaves the building entirely to her children. But not all the children are workers, for in the ant-hill, as in the beehive, there are drones as well as workers.

When the ant chooses a place for a home, she begins to dig in nearly the same manner as a dog at a rabbit's burrow. She lays her head close to the ground, and with her front pair of legs loosens the soil and tosses it back between her hind legs, all the while waving her little feelers.

When the hole is deep enough to cover her body, she cannot throw the soil out with her

feet. Then she uses her jaws, and, if the soil is sandy, carries it out grain by grain. Until her tunnel is wide enough to turn round in, she has to back out of it.

When the tunnel is two or three inches long a room is made, then more tunnels, or halls, and more rooms. As this work goes on, the ants bite off bits of earth and roll them into little balls with their feet. These balls are carried out and laid around the openings. By and by these balls form what we call the ant-hill.

Some of the rooms are round, some are shaped like a horseshoe. Their uses are as different as their shapes. Among them you will find sleeping rooms, nurseries, pantries, and dining rooms. Sometimes the walls seem to be rubbed with a kind of sticky oil or gum, as if to keep them from falling in.

Let us peep into the nursery. Out of each ant-egg there comes in a short time a hungry little ant. The baby-ant, or larva, is like a small white worm. The workers are very kind to the young ants. They brush or lick them

as a cat does a kitten, and keep them nearly as white as snow. They feed them four or five times a day, and when it is warm and dry they carry them up to the top of the ant-hill to bask in the sun. What hurrying and scurrying if a shower should come when the babies are outside! The nurses rush in the greatest haste to carry them to a dry place.



The young ants, except the workers, have wings, and when they wish to seek new homes they use these wings in flight. When an ant has chosen a place to start a new hill, the first thing she does is to take off her wings. This she can do almost as easily and quickly as a boy can take off his coat. Her wings do not grow on again. Why should they? She will never need them again in the work in her underground home.

Try! Try! and try again;
The boys who keep on trying
Have made the world's best men.

HOSPITALITY

Around the fire one wintry night,
The farmer's rosy children sat;
The fagot lent its blazing light,
And jokes went round and careless chat.

When, hark! a gentle hand they hear,
Low tapping at the bolted door;
And thus to gain their willing ear,
A feeble voice was heard implore:—

“Cold blows the blast across the moor;
The sleet drives hissing in the wind;
Yon toilsome mountain lies before;
A dreary treeless waste behind.

“My eyes are weak and dim with age,
No road nor path can I descry;
And these poor rags ill stand the rage,
Of such a keen, inclement sky.

“So faint I am these tottering feet
No more my feeble frame can bear,
My sinking heart forgets to beat,
And drifting snows my tomb prepare.

“Open your hospitable door,
And shield me from the biting blast;
Cold, cold it blows across the moor,
The weary moor that I have pass’d!”

With hasty steps the farmer ran,
And close beside the fire they place
The poor half-frozen beggar man
With shaking limbs and pallid face.

The little children flocking came
And warm’d his stiffening hands in theirs;
And busily the good old dame
A comfortable meal prepares.

Their kindness cheer’d his drooping soul;
And slowly down his wrinkled cheeks,
The big round tear was seen to roll
Which told the thanks he could not speak.

The children, too, began to sigh,
And all their merry chat was o’er,
And yet they felt, they knew not why,
More glad than they had been before.

— ANNA LETITIA BARBAULD.

THE MAPLE

On the topmost twig of a maple tree there grew a seed. In the springtime the gentle movement of the sap, and the soft rustle of the leaves whispering among themselves, had awakened him. Then, day by day, half sleeping and half conscious, he had fed upon what the roots provided, stretching himself lazily in the sunshine. Presently his wing began to unfold.

"That is very curious," said he, stirring a little. "It must be a mistake. I don't flutter about like the bees." That bit of wing which seemed his, and not his, puzzled him. "It must belong to something else," he thought. And afterwards he was always on the lookout for a bee or a dragon-fly with only one wing. But none came.

The hot summer noons and the long moonlit nights became sultrier, and the leaves drooped. "How withered I am!" said the seed to his most intimate friend, a leaf that hung from a bough near by. "It makes me feel quite brittle." But

the leaf did not answer, for just then it fell from the twig to the ground.

"Ah!" murmured the maple seed, "I understand." So he was not surprised when a rude breeze twisted him off one day, and sent him spinning into space.

"Here I go," thought he, "and this is the end of it."

"Puff!" said the breeze, who had seen much of the world. "Puff!" and he blew the seed right into a crack in the earth.

"It must be the end, for all that," insisted the seed. No wonder he thought so, for it was cold and dark where he lay. A troubled cloud leaned down and wept over him. Then he began to grow amazingly in the warmth and moisture.

"If this goes on," he thought, "I shall certainly burst, and then I must die. How is one to live with a crack in one's sides?"

But the maple seed was wrong. He did not die. An unexpected, mysterious strength sustained him. His roots found food in the brown earth, and he lifted up a slender stem into the

pure sunlight and warm air. Through spring, summer, autumn, and winter, year after year, this lived and grew, until the tiny sapling had become a beautiful tree with spreading branches.

It was very pleasant on the lawn. An old couple from the house near by came out in good weather to sit under the tree. They reminded him of some fragile leaves he had seen fluttering somewhere in the past. He was glad to have them come, and he kept his coolest shade for them. Partly for their sakes, he liked to have the robins sing in his branches.

The years went by. The old man tottered out alone to sit in the cool shadow. He was bent and sorrowful.

"Ah," sighed the tree, "I know! I know! He has lost his leaf and feels brittle. If I could only tell him this is not the end!"

After this many sunny days came, but not the old man, and the tree concluded that he had been blown away. "If he only knew that he would grow again!" he said to himself. "Unless one knows that, it is so uncomfortable to lie in the

dark. How happy he would be if I could tell him."

A great storm came. The sky blackened, the winds blew with might, and the heavy rain fell. The maple was uprooted and broken. The next day there came men with axes, who cut the tree in pieces and drew it to the house.

"Is this the end?" he questioned. But no. The logs were piled one day in the fireplace in a large, sunny room. The old man leaned from his chair to warm his hands by the cheerful heat the crimson flame gave out. "Is it the maple?" he said. "Ah! this goes with the rest."

The fire grew brighter, burned duller, turned to embers, smouldered to ashes. The hearth was cold. The figure was sitting still in the arm-chair, but the old man himself had blown away.

The spirit of the maple tree whispered: "Does he know? There is *no* end!"

All that's great and good is done
Just by patient trying.

THE FROST

The Frost looked forth one still, clear night,
And whispered, "Now I shall be out of sight;
So through the valley and over the height

In silence I'll take my way.

I will not go on like that blustering train,
The wind and the snow, the hail and the rain,
Who make so much bustle and noise in vain.

But I'll be as busy as they."

Then he flew to the mountain and powdered its
crest,

He lit on the trees and their boughs he dressed
In diamond beads, and over the breast

Of the quivering lake he spread

A coat of mail that need not fear

The downward point of many a spear
That he hung on its margin far and near,

Where a rock could rear his head.

He went to the window of those who slept,
And over each pane like a fairy crept.
Wherever he breathed, wherever he stepped,

By the light of the moon were seen
Most beautiful things; there were flowers and
trees,

There were bevvies of birds, and swarms of bees,
There were cities, and temples, and towers, and
these

All pictured in silver and sheen.

But he did one thing that was hardly fair:
He peeped in the cupboard, and finding there
That all had forgotten for him to prepare,

“Now just to set them thinking —
I’ll bite this basket of fruit,” said he,
“This costly pitcher I’ll break in three,
And the glass of water they’ve left for me,
Shall ’tchick to tell them I’m drinking.”

— HANNAH F. GOULD.

For want of a nail the shoe was lost,
For want of a shoe the horse was lost,
For want of a horse the rider was lost,
For want of a rider the battle was lost,
And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.

THE RAINBOW BRIDGE

In the sky where the amber tints are seen on the clouds, Iris was born. She loved her home and all the beautiful things around her.

Perhaps she sailed in the moon's silver boat, and knew why the stars kept twinkling. Perhaps she feasted on sunshine and dew, and slept on the soft white clouds.

Better than anything in her sky home, Iris loved her grandfather—the stern old ocean who lived far below the sky.

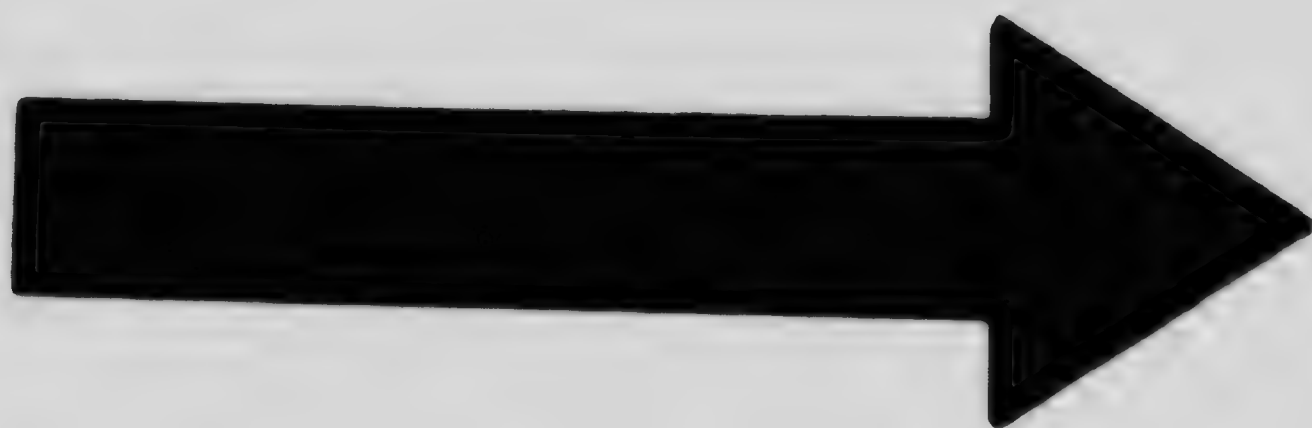
When he was merry, and drove his white horses over the water, she was happy. When he was troubled, and looked dark and sad, she quietly slipped her hand into his. Then the ocean smiled and became gentle again.

He longed always to keep Iris with him, but the sun said: "No, Iris belongs to both ocean and sky. Let her be the messenger between heaven and earth." So the ocean and the sun made her a bridge of beautiful colors that reached from the earth to the sky.



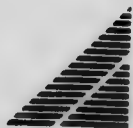
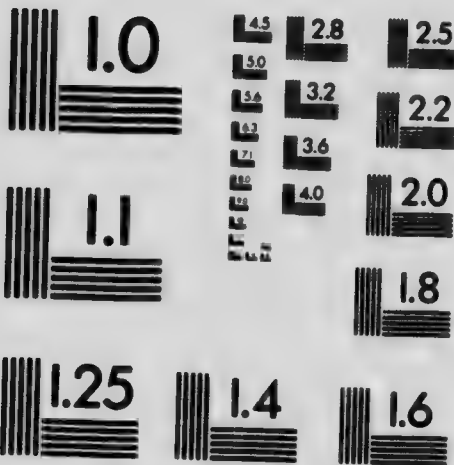
From painting by Bacon

A LESSON IN BOAT BUILDING



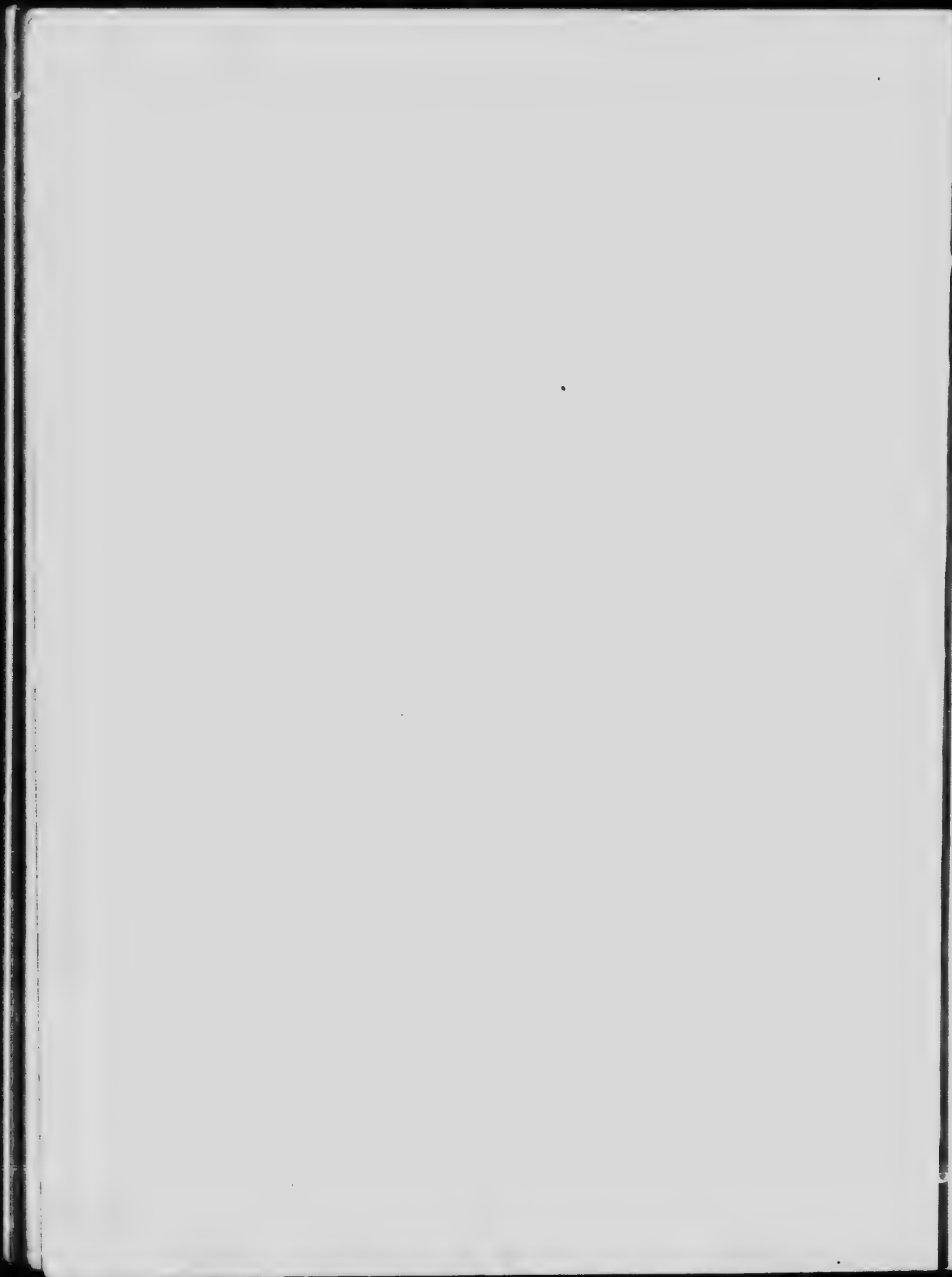
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No one had ever seen so wonderful a bridge. Not only did it reach from the earth to the sky, but across it was a most beautiful carpet. The sky was the loom, and the sun himself was the weaver.

The wind shuttle flew back and forth across the great sky loom where sat the sun; back and forth it flew until the weaving was done. When the carpet was finished, the ribbons of silver mist had met with a wonderful change.

So well had the weaver sun done his work that the ribbons of silver were turned into ribbons of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. All the tints of earth's fairest flowers were there; and the silver mist was there; only now one could not be told from the other.

And to this day in all the world of beautiful things there is nothing half so beautiful as this rainbow bridge.

A merry heart doeth good like a medicine.
Who pleasure gives, shall joy receive.

THE OPEN WINDOW

The old house by the lindens
 Stood silent in the shade,
And on the gravelled pathway
 The light and shadow played.

I saw the nursery windows .
 Wide open to the air,
But the faces of the children,
 They were no longer there.

The large Newfoundland house dog
 Was standing by the door;
He looked for his little playmates,
 Who would return no more.

They walked not under the lindens,
 They played not in the hall;
But shadow, and silence, and sadness
 Were hanging over all.

The birds sang in the branches
 With sweet, familiar tone;
But the voices of the children
 Will be heard in dreams alone!

— HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

MARCH

In the snowing and the blowing,
In the cruel sleet,
Little flowers begin their growing
Far beneath our feet.

Softly taps the Spring, and cheerily,
“Darling, are you here?”
Till they answer, “We are nearly,
Nearly ready, dear.”

“Where is Winter, with his snowing?
Tell us, Spring,” they say.
Then she answers, “He is going,
Going on his way.”

“Poor old Winter does not love you,
But his time is past;
Soon my birds shall sing above you,
Set you free at last.”

— MARY MAPES DODGE.

Kind words are little sunbeams,
That sparkle as they fall.

STORY OF A DROP OF WATER

Up among the hills there is a dell where a headlong little stream rests for a moment, after leaping from the rocks above, before it hurries on towards the sea.

It rests in a deep pool, so clear that you may count the pebbles at the bottom; and, when the sun shines, the little fish cast a shadow on the white stones. All round about, the ivy clings to the rocks; and, just near enough to the waterfall to be sprinkled now and then with the spray, a wild convolvulus droops over the pool.

At the edge of one of the flower-bells I saw a drop of water hang, and it seemed as though the convolvulus were bending down an ear to listen to what the drop of water had to say.

I said to myself, "I shall listen, too; for if my ears are too dull for such a tiny voice, perhaps my heart can hear."

So I listened with my heart, and I shall tell you what the drop of water seemed to be saying.

The convolvulus wanted to know all about the

travels of the drop. "You restless little drop of water," it said, "where do you come from, and whither are you going? I sit here all the day, in the sunshine and the rain. I take thankfully what God gives me, and I am very happy. I love the stream, and the rocks, and the blue sky overhead; they are all so good to me.

"But still, before I die, I should like to know what there is outside this little dell. The fishes never speak, and the birds only sing. It makes me glad to hear them; but they sing about nothing but their mates and their little ones, and something else that I cannot rightly understand, though they say I shall know all about it after I am dead.

"The bees come often to see me, but when I ask them about the world they say they know nothing about it; they have no time to think about anything but honey. So pray, little drop of water, tell me what you have seen."

And the little drop of water said, "Dear, beautiful flower, I shall tell you all I know, for in all my travels I never met with any one

fairer than you. But I must be quick, for there are thousands and thousands of us, all having a race to the sea, and I cannot bear to be the last.

"I was born on a calm, starlight night, and I found myself resting in the bosom of a daisy. I looked round. There were thousands upon thousands just like myself, seeming to come out of the air, and to go to sleep on blades of grass and in the cups of flowers. ✱

"I listened, and I heard a gurgling of water just below me, and then I could see that there was a tiny little rill pushing its way amongst the roots of the grass.

"Then there came a great light, and a little breeze went shivering all amongst the leaves and flowers. At that a thousand thousand sleepy drops woke up, and leaping into the little rill went hurrying along.

"I joined them, and we hastened on down glassy slopes facing the morning sun. I was so bright and glad then, that I ran faster and faster, till I slid over a smooth, broad stone, and found

myself in a deep, strong stream between high, woody banks.

"Then, all at once, the world seemed to open out before me. For one moment I could look down a steep mountain height, and away over sunny fields, and waving woods, and curling smoke. For one moment only; then I was lost in a struggling, shouting, whirling maze of drops, that seemed to have lost their senses altogether.

"Some cried, 'On with you! away!' others cried, 'Back!' Some said, 'Here, this way!' others said, 'No, that way!' But not one of us could help himself at all. I was dashed against a hard rock, flung back again, whirled round and round, pushed under a shelving stone, and then I took a leap right into the air.

"Away I went; I was not at all frightened, you know, because this was just the sort of thing I was born for.

"So I flew down, down, down through the air, and I felt the sunbeams rattling against me all the way; and then they would spring back and

dance round me in circles of green and gold, and red and blue. You can have no idea how delightful it was.

"But it was soon over, and then I found myself at the bottom of a waterfall, in a broad and quiet river. Here I travelled on more leisurely for some time. Then I was suddenly pushed into a narrow channel; and just as I was wondering how this was to end I was plunged into a deep, dark hole, where I had to grope and stumble amongst the spokes of a great wheel that went splashing round and round.

"There was a grumbling noise like thunder somewhere near, but I did not stop to find out what it was; I ran along as fast as I could, and was glad to find myself out in the broad river again.

"By and by we came to a town where large ships could float on the water. If you saw them, you would wonder how little water-drops such as we are could bear them up; but I suppose we must be very strong, for we felt them no weight at all. ✓

“‘Now,’ we said to one another, ‘we shall soon reach the sea.’ But that was not quite so easy as we supposed; for suddenly we met a vast host of salt-water drops marching straight against us.

“‘Let us pass,’ we said, ‘for our home is in the sea.’

“But they would not listen; they came pouring along with resistless power, and drove us back for a mile or two.

“Then they suddenly turned and said, ‘Come along—it was only our fun.’

“And so we all swept out together amongst the rolling ocean waves.

“Oh, it is a free and glorious life there! No banks to bind you in, no channels to force you this way or that. Rising and falling, rolling and swaying hither and thither, springing into air, playing with the sunbeams, and then plunging back into the heart of the gloomy waves. it is the heaven of water-drops, to which we are always trying to get back.

“But I was not to stay there long that time;

a vast, foaming billow shook me off from its crest. A gust of wind caught me and carried me aloft.

"Then I fainted in the hot sun, and I remember nothing more till I woke again on a bank of silver cloud that glided before the wind towards the distant hills. It was beautiful to see the white-sailed ships flitting over the water, and the shadows of the clouds racing over the broad, bright surface.

"But, as we floated on, we left the glorious sea behind. Nearer and nearer came the hills, growing darker as we approached. Then a cold, wet wind met us, and we all shivered and shook; and as we shivered we began to fall, and knew that we were turned into a shower of rain.

"I fell into a rocky crevice, and groped my way along in the dark through many windings and turnings, till suddenly I felt a bustle and pushing all around me, and amongst a troop like myself I burst into the sunlight again, and raced after the rest, round and round a rocky basin fringed with fern.

"After several mazy circles I found my way out, and was hurried along to the top of the fall that brought me to your feet.

"Farewell! farewell, little flower! Let me away to my heaven in the sea. God tells you to rest here, but to me he gives no rest except in the glorious sea. And so wherever I am, in cloud or rainbow, or stream or river, always the one thing I crave for is to get back to the sea."

Then the drop fell, and I could see him no more.

KINDNESS AND TRUTH

True worth is in being, not seeming, —
In doing each day that goes by,
Some little good, — not in dreaming
Of great things to do by and by.
For whatever men say in their blindness,
And spite of the fancies of youth,
There's nothing so kingly as Kindness,
There's nothing so royal as Truth.

FRIENDS

North-wind came whistling through the wood,
Where the tender sweet things grew, —
The tall, fair ferns and the maiden's hair,
And the gentle gentians blue.

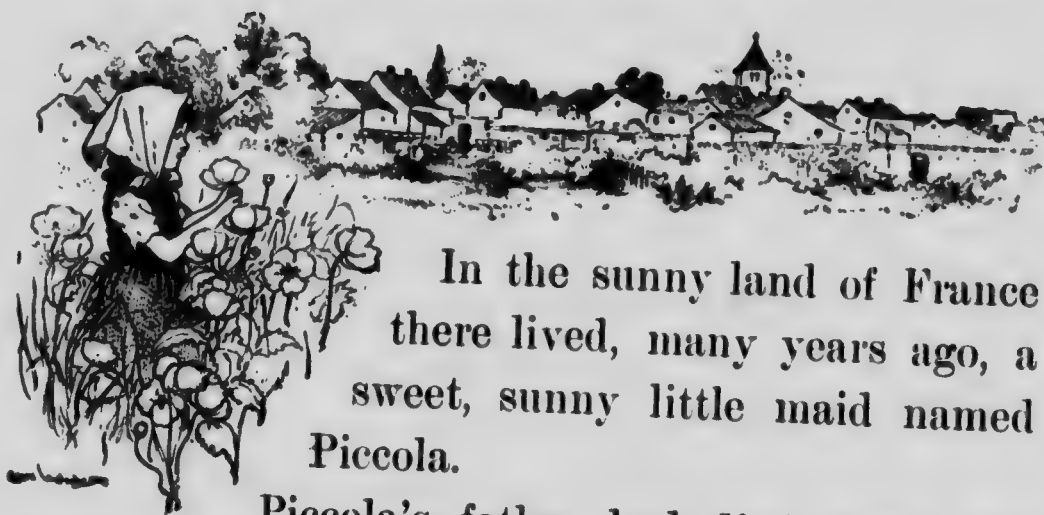
"It's very cold — are we growing old?"
They sighed, "What shall we do?"

The sigh went up to the loving leaves,
"We must help," they whispered low;
"They are frightened and weak, O brave old trees!
But we love you well, you know."
And the trees said, "We are strong — make haste,
Down to the darlings go."

So the leaves went floating, floating down,
All yellow and brown and red,
And the frail little trembling, thankful things
Lay still and were comforted.
And the blue sky smiled through the bare old trees,
Down on their safe, warm bed.

— L. G. WARNER.

THE CHRISTMAS GIFT



In the sunny land of France there lived, many years ago, a sweet, sunny little maid named Piccola.

Piccola's father had died when she was a baby, and her mother was very poor and had to work hard all day in the fields for a few cents. Little Piccola had no dolls and toys, and she was often hungry and cold, but she was never sad or lonely.

What if there were no children for her to play with! What if she did not have fine clothes and beautiful toys! In summer there were always the birds in the forest, and the flowers in the fields and meadows, — the birds sang so sweetly, and the flowers were so bright and pretty!

In the winter, when the ground was covered

with snow, Piccola helped her mother, and knit long stockings of blue wool. The snowbirds had to be fed with crumbs, if she could find any, and then there was Christmas Day.

But one year her mother was ill, and could not earn any money. Piccola worked hard all the day long, and sold the stockings which she knit, even when her own little bare feet were blue with the cold.

As Christmas Day drew near, she said to her mother: "I wonder what the good Saint Nicholas will bring me this year. I cannot hang my stocking in the fireplace, but I shall put my wooden shoe on the hearth for him. He will not forget me, I am sure."

"Do not think of it this year, my dear child," replied her mother. "We must be glad if we have bread enough to eat."

But Piccola could not believe that the good Saint would forget her. On Christmas Eve she put her little wooden shoe on the hearth, and went to sleep to dream of Saint Nicholas.

As the poor mother looked at the little shoe,

she thought how unhappy her dear child would be to find it empty in the morning, and wished that she had something, even if it were only a tiny cake, for a Christmas gift. There was no money in the house but a few cents, and these must be saved to buy bread.

When the morning dawned Piccola awoke and ran to her shoe.

Saint Nicholas had come in the night. He had not forgotten the little child who had thought of him with such faith. See what he had brought her. It lay in the wooden shoe, looking up at her with its two bright eyes, and chirping contentedly as she stroked its soft feathers.



A little song sparrow, cold and hungry, had flown into the chimney and down to the room, and had hopped into the shoe.

Piccola danced for joy, and clapped the shivering sparrow to her breast. She ran to her mother's bedside. "Look, look!" she cried. "A Christmas gift, a gift from the good Saint



PICCOLA

Nicholas!" and she danced again in her little bare feet.

Then she fed and warmed the bird, and cared for it tenderly all winter long. She taught it to take crumbs from her hand and her lips, and to sit on her shoulder while she was working.

In the spring she opened the window for it to fly away, but it made a nest in the woods nearby, and came often in the early morning to sing its sweetest songs near her door.

THE FOUR SWEET MONTHS

First, April, she with mellow showers,
Opens the way for early flowers;
Then after her comes smiling May,
In a more rich and sweet array;
Next enters June and brings us more
Gems, than those two that went before;
Then lastly July comes and she
More wealth brings in than all those three.

— ROBERT HERRICK.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR .

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the children's hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret,
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape, they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away!

— HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.



GRACE DARLING AND HER FATHER

Brooks

GRACE DARLING

Some years ago, on the east coast of England, a lighthouse-keeper lived on a little island with his daughter Grace, a girl of about fifteen or sixteen years.

One September day there was a fearful storm. The wind roared and howled, so that every moment it seemed as if the lighthouse would be blown down. The waves dashed against the rocks with a deafening roar. As night came on, the storm seemed to grow worse, and when father and daughter went to bed they could not sleep.

In the middle of the night a cry was heard. It seemed to come from some one in the distance. But it was so dark that it was impossible to see, and the noise was so great it was impossible to hear more than an occasional shout.

All night long the father and daughter listened to the cries, but were unable to render any assistance. In the morning they could see a ship on the rocks about a mile away. People were seen hanging to the rigging.

"Father, we must go to save them," said Grace. "No, no, my child," said the father. "Our boat could not live in such a sea. It would be wrong to risk our lives." But as they saw the men going to their death the brave pair resolved to make an effort to reach them.

After the greatest effort the boat was launched. What an awful hour before they reached the broken vessel! Every minute the waves threatened to swallow the little lifeboat.

At last they reached the ship. Those on board were so tired out they were almost helpless. So, while the lighthouse-keeper went on board to assist them, Grace kept the heavy boat in its place. After a long time the last of the sufferers was lowered into the boat. Strong arms seized the oars and soon all were safe in the lighthouse.

Then the young girl worked for days with the worn-out sufferers, until at last all were restored to health.

Is it any wonder that this noble deed was ta'ked about for years, or that hundreds of people came to see the young girl who had so bravely

risked her life to save the lives of others? If you go to England, you may yet see the very boat that Grace Darling rowed on that awful morning, and on the tombstone over her grave you may read the story of her brave deed.

AN EASTERN LEGEND

There's a tender Eastern legend,
In a volume old and rare,
Of the Christ-child in his garden,
Walking with the children there.
And it tells—this strange, sweet story —
(True or false, ah, who shall say?)
How a bird with broken pinion
Dead within the garden lay.
And the children, children cruel,
Lifted it by shattered wing,
Shouting, "Make us merry music,
Sing, you lazy fellow, sing."
But the Christ-child bent above it,
Took it in his gentle hand,

Full of pity for the suffering
He alone could understand.
Whispered to it — oh, so softly!
Laid his lips upon its throat,
And the song life, swift returning,
Sounded out in one glad note.
Then away, on wings unwearied,
Joyously it sang and soared,
And the little children kneeling
Called the Christ-child, "Master — Lord."

— GRACE DUFFIELD GOODWIN.

THE PLANTING OF A TREE

He who plants a tree,
He plants love;
Tents of coolness spreading out above
Wayfarers, he may not live to see.
Gifts that grow are best
Hands that bless are blest.
Plant! Life does the rest.
Heaven and earth help him who plants a tree,
And his work its own reward shall be.

THE CAVE-DWELLERS

In the summer holidays we used to visit Uncle Ben's home. One room in his house was full of the most curious things we had ever seen. Nothing else pleased us so much as when Uncle Ben would take one of these curious objects and tell us a story about it.

One day when he showed us a pointed rod of wood with a twirling-string wound around it, he told us this story:—

People have not always lived in houses as they do now. They had to learn how to build houses, and how to make axes to cut the trees, and other tools to shape the parts of the house.

In the warm days they did not feel the need of houses. What do you think they did when the winter came?

It is now known that long, long ago, before men learned how to make tools, they dwelt in caves.

FLINT
HAMMER

But the caves were also the homes of the cave-bears, and the hyenas, and other wild animals more fierce than any that live in the world now. You see that men could not live in the caves before they learned how to make spears and knives to kill the wild animals.



FLINT
ARROW-HEAD

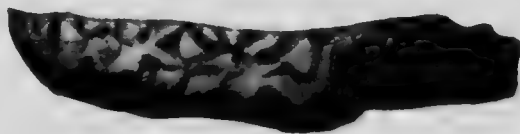
Where could men and women and little children sleep in safety when they had nothing to protect them from the cave-bears and hyenas? They must have made their homes in the branches of trees, just as some wild tribes of men do at this day. That distant time is called the age of the Tree-dwellers.

But when men learned how to make and use fire, then they began to live in caves and in brush huts built on the ground. No wild animal will enter a hut or a cave that is guarded by fire. Of course they had no matches to light the fire. They had not yet learned what to put on the match-sticks, even if they had had tools to make them.

They got fire from the Fire Country. There was a country where there were high hills that had fire burning in them all the time. It was hard work to bring the fire all the way from the Fire Country. But when they got it to the cave they kept it burning night and day, summer and winter. The wisest woman in the clan was chosen to be Fire Keeper.

Wide-Awake was a very wise cave-man. His clan had learned how to sharpen the end of a hard stick in the fire and to use it, or a splinter of bone, to bore a hole.

One day when Wide-Awake was boring a hole, he found that the end of the stick with which he was boring became quite hot. He twirled it faster and it began to smoke. Then he twirled it harder and faster still, and at last he was rewarded with real fire.



FLINT KNIFE

How proud he was when he found out how to get fire without going far away to the Fire Country.

He did not at first tell the other people how he had made fire. They thought it wonderful that he could go off by himself and bring back fire from a place where there was no fire-hill. So they made him the head of the clan, and they called him the Fire King.

“That is the story for to-day,” said Uncle Ben, “but before I tell you the next one, I wish you would try to think out how the cave people made their clothing, and carried water, and wove baskets, and killed wild animals, without needles or pails or knives or guns such as people use now.”

THE SILVER BOAT

There is a boat upon a sea ;
It never stops for you or me.
The sea is blue, the boat is white ;
It sails through winter and summer night.

The swarthy child in India land
Points to the prow with eager hand ;
The little Lapland babies cry
For the silver boat a-sailing by.

It fears no gale, it fears no wreck ;
It never meets a change or check
Through weather fine or weather wild ;
The oldest saw it when a child.

Upon another sea below
Full many vessels come and go ;
Upon the swaying, swinging tide
Into the distant worlds they ride.

And strange to tell, the sea below,
Where countless vessels come and go,
Obeys the little boat on high
Through all the centuries sailing by.

—SELECTED.

SPEAK THE TRUTH

Speak the Truth !
Truth is beautiful and brave,
Strong to bless and strong to save ;
Falsehood is a cowardly knave ;
From it turn thy steps in youth —
Follow truth.

—SELECTED.

THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE



In England long ago there lived a great king named Arthur. He had around him a band of faithful knights. They were called the Knights of the Round Table, and you can easily guess why they had that name.

Now to be a knight one had to be strong and brave and true. To be a Knight of the Round Table meant that one had to be one of the strongest, truest, and bravest of knights.

The Knights of the Round Table were always seeking some good work to do. If any one was in danger, they were ready, even at the risk of their own lives, to go to the rescue. Nothing was too hard or too dangerous for them.

From morning till night they could be seen on their beautiful chargers. They rode often alone, and often two by two, and sometimes in bands over the fields and through the forests.

Wherever they found poor and needy people they helped them; wherever they found sadness or sorrow they tried to drive it away. They always thought of others first and of themselves last. Do you wonder that the people loved them, and ran to the doors to see them pass?

The little children were their friends, for they were always friends to the children. It was not strange that in each child's heart there grew the desire to be a knight like the Knights of the Round Table. When the blasts from the bugle horns of the knights fell on the ears of the children, they would call to each other, "The Knights are coming! The Knights are coming!" Then they would run to the roadside and watch them as they passed by. The tall knights in their beautiful armor was to them the most beautiful sight in the world. And how the little hearts would beat with joy when the knights would



KING ARTHUR

smile at them or stop to speak a few words with them.

It was not long before the children knew all the knights of King Arthur's court. They would often cry out, "Here comes Sir Galahad," or "Here comes Sir Lancelot," or "Sir Percival." Sir Galahad was the youngest and best-loved knight in all the court. Sir Lancelot was the most powerful and daring, and was called "The Flower of Bravery." Sir Percival was known as "The Pure One," because he was so good and true.

After the knights had passed, the children would grow more gentle and loving and brave. They would think of others more than of themselves. There would come over their faces a beautiful light. This light told to others that the children were growing to be true knights.

Kind hearts are the garden ;
Kind thoughts are the roots ;
Kind words are the blossoms ;
Kind deeds are the fruits.

THE TREE

The Tree's early leaf buds were bursting their
brown ;

" Shall I take them away ? " said the Frost, sweep-
ing down.

" No, leave them alone

Till the blossoms have grown,"

Prayed the Tree, while he trembled from rootlet
to crown.

The Tree bore his blossoms, and all the birds sung ;

" Shall I take them away ? " said the Wind as he
swung.

" No, leave them alone

Till the berries have grown,"

Said the Tree, while his leaflets quivering hung.

The Tree bore his fruit in the midsummer glow ;

Said the girl, " May I gather thy berries now ? "

" Yes, all thou canst see ;

Take them ; all are for thee,"

Said the Tree, while he bent down his laden
boughs low.

TALKING IN THEIR SLEEP

"You think I am dead,"

The apple tree said,

"Because I have never a leaf to show —

Because I stoop,

And my branches droop,

And the dull gray mosses over me grow!

But I'm all alive in trunk and shoot;

The buds of next May

I fold away —

But I pity the withered grass at my root."

"You think I am dead,"

The quick grass said,

"Because I have parted with stem and blade!

But under the ground

I am safe and sound

With the snow's thick blanket over me laid.

I'm all alive and ready to shoot,

Should the spring of the year

Come dancing here —

But I pity the flower without branch or root."

"You think I am dead,"

A soft voice said,

"Because not a branch or root I own!

I never have died,

But close I hide

In a plummy seed that the wind has sown.

Patient I wait through the long winter hours;

You will see me again —

I shall laugh at you then,

Out of the eyes of a hundred flowers."

— EDITH M. THOMAS.

THE STORY OF SIR GALAHAD

The Knights of the Round Table were met together at Camelot, and Arthur had ordered the knights to take their places at the table.

But Sir Kay, the ruler of the feast, spoke out: "If you now sit down, you will break the royal custom. You have never sat down at a high feast until you have seen some strange adventure."

"That is true, Sir Kay," said the king. "My mind was taken up with other things. Let us hold the feast for a time."

Then a man ran in crying aloud: "I bring you news, Sir King. In the midst of the river there is a stone floating, and in it there is set a sword."

"We shall go out and see it," said the king. So they all went down to the river, and there they found the stone of which the man had spoken. In the stone was a sword, and on it were these words:—

"No man shall take me but the man who shall wear me, and he shall be the best knight in the world."

When the king read this, he turned to Sir Lancelot and said, "This sword, sir, ought to be yours, for you are the best knight in all the world." But Sir Lancelot answered sadly: "The sword is not for me. I dare not touch it."

Then Sir Percival and another knight tried to pull the sword from its place, but it would not move. As no other knight would dare to try, the king ordered all back to the feast, for, said he, "We have seen a strange adventure this day."

So each knight took his place, and the feast

began. The hall was full of noise and laughter. But there was one seat — the Seat Perilous — which was empty. Across the chair was hung a silken veil.



G. F. Watts

SIR GALAHAD

Suddenly a wonderful thing happened. All the doors and windows of the great hall shut themselves, and it was dark as night. Out of the darkness there came a fair soft light, which filled the place with its beams. The light seemed to come from behind the silken veil of the Seat Perilous.

All the knights were sore afraid, but Arthur rose in his place and calmed them with the words, "Lords and knights, be not afraid, but glad, for this day

we shall see him who shall sit in the Seat Perilous."

While the king was speaking, an old man in a white robe came into the room. He led in a young man who was clad in red from top to toe. He had neither shield nor armor, but by his side he carried an empty scabbard.

All the knights arose, and the king cried, "Welcome! thrice welcome to our royal feast!"

Then the old man put on the young knight a crimson robe, and led him to the wonderful Seat Perilous. He lifted the silken veil, and saw these words carved on the chair in golden letters:---

"This is the seat of Galahad, the good knight."

The young knight bowed to the king, and sat in the seat that no man had ever dared to occupy. Then all wondered greatly at the youth and beauty of the pure and holy knight; but they loved him and welcomed him, and felt no envy because he was called the best.

Be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted.



HE IS RISEN

Plockhorst

A SONG OF EASTER

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A SONG OF EASTER

Sing, children, sing!
And the lily censers swing;
Sing that life and joy are waking
And that Death no more is king.
Sing the happy, happy tumult
Of the slowly brightening Spring;
Sing, little children, sing!

Sing, children, sing!
Winter wild has taken wing.
Fill the air with the sweet tidings
Till the frosty echoes ring!

Along the eaves the icicles
No longer glittering cling,
And the crocus in the garden
Lifts its bright face to the sun,
And in the meadows softly
The brooks begin to run,
And the golden catkins swing
In the warm airs of the Spring;
Sing, little children, sing!

— CELIA THAXTER.

THE BELL OF JUSTICE

In the sunny land of Italy there is a little old town, built on the side of a steep hill.

Ages ago this town was ruled by a king who loved his people and did all that he could to make them happy.

One day he bought a great bell, and had it hung up in a tower in the market-place. To the bell was fastened a long rope that reached down to the ground. The smallest child in the place could ring the bell if he wished to do so.

When all was ready, the king called the people together and said: "This is the bell of justice. It is meant for all, rich and poor, young and old.

"If any one is wronged, let him come and ring this bell. At its sound the judges will meet together and see that right is done."

Years passed away. Many times had the bell been rung, and many were the wrongs that had been set right by the judges. Much of the rope had rotted away with age, and the part that was

left was now so short that only a tall man could reach it.

One day, when the judges met in the market-place, they were shocked to see the state of the bell-rope. "This will never do," they said. "If a child were wronged, he could not ring the bell to let us know."

They gave orders that a new rope should be bought; but, strange to say, there was not a rope in all the town.

Then they sent a man to the city beyond the mountains to buy a rope, and they all looked about for something that could be used until it came.

"This will do," said a man in the crowd. He held in his hand a long grape-vine with the leaves still upon it. "This will do for a rope."

He climbed up and fastened the slender vine to the bell. It was so long that it trailed on the ground, as the rope had done.

"Yes, that will do," said the judges. "Let it be as it is. Even a little child can now ring the bell quite easily."

Now, not far from the town there lived a man who had been a brave general in his youth.

He had fought in many battles, and the king had rewarded him with a gift of houses and lands.

In his battles this general had ridden a horse that had carried him through many dangers. The horse was as brave and as well known as his master.

When the general grew old, he cared no more for brave deeds, but became a miser. He sold his lands and houses, and lived with his moneybags in a wretched hut.

He tried to sell his old horse, but no one would buy the worn-out animal. Then he tried to give him away, but no one would take him even as a gift. At last he turned the poor beast out, and left him to shift for himself.

Lame and hungry, the old horse hobbled along the dusty roads, and munched at the blades of grass that he found by the way.

The boys threw stones at him, the dogs barked at him, and in all the world there was no one to take pity on him.

One hot afternoon, when the people of the town were sleeping, the poor beast wandered into the market-place.

He saw the leaves on the grape-vine that hung from the bell of justice, and stretching out his thin neck, he tried to pull one of them off.

Suddenly the people of the town heard the bell ring. The judges heard it also, and at once they went to the market-place. They wondered who could be ringing the bell at such a time. When they came to the tower, they saw the poor old horse nibbling at the vine.

"See!" they cried; "it is the miser's steed. He has come to call for justice. His master, as everybody knows, has treated him very badly. He shall have justice."

Meanwhile a crowd of men, women, and children had gathered in the market-place, eager to learn what wrong was to be righted.

When they saw the horse, they pressed forward to tell the judges how they had seen the poor beast wandering about, unfed and uncared for, while his master sat at home counting his gold.



“Go and bring the miser hither,” said the judges. When the miser came, the chief judge said to him: “This horse has served you well for many years.

“He has saved you from many a peril, and has helped you to gain your wealth. Now you turn him adrift to die of hunger.

“This shall be your punishment. One-half of your gold shall be taken from you, and used to buy your old horse shelter and food.

"He shall graze in a green pasture of his own,
and sleep in his own comfortable stall, all the
days of his life."

The miser wept when they took his gold from
him; but the people shouted for joy, and the
old horse was led away to enjoy peace and plenty
for the rest of his life.

A SONG

The year's at the spring;
The day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The Lark's on the wing;
The Snail's on the thorn;
God's in his heaven —
All's right with the world.

— ROBERT BROWNING.

Beautiful faces are those that wear —
It matters little if dark or fair —
Whole-souled honesty printed there.



THE CHILD'S WORLD

THE CHILD'S WORLD

Great, wide, beautiful, wonderful World,
With the wonderful water round you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast, —
World, you are beautifully dressed.

The wonderful air is over me,
And the wonderful wind is shaking the tree;
It walks on the water, and whirls the mills,
And talks to itself on the top of the hills.

You, friendly Earth! how far do you go,
With the wheat-fields that nod and the rivers that
flow,

With cities and gardens, and cliffs, and isles,
And people upon you for thousands of miles?

Ah, you are so great, and I am so small,
I tremble to think of you, World, at all;
And yet, when I said my prayers, to-day,
A whisper inside me seemed to say,

"You are more than the Earth, though you are
such a dot:

You can love and think, and the Earth can not!"

— WILLIAM B. RAND.



H. L. Robert

THE SOWER AND THE SEED

The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow, and when he sowed, some seeds fell

by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up. Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth; and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up and choked them. But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed leaving him half dead.

And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

And likewise a Levite, when he was at that

place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him he had compassion on him.

And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee.

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves?

And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Beautiful hands are those that do
Work that is earnest, brave, and true,
Moment by moment, the long day through.

PROSERPINA

Once upon a time, long ago, there lived a goddess whose name was Ceres. She loved all the plants and grains, and cared for them.

Ceres had a dear little girl named Proserpina. She loved her dearly, and would not let her go into the fields alone.

One day Ceres said to Proserpina: "Dear child, some of my poor plants are thirsty. The ground is very dry, and they cannot get any water. I must go to see what I can do for them. While I am gone you may go to the seashore and play with the sea nymphs."

Ceres put on her bonnet of red poppies. She



CERES

then stepped into her chariot and said, "Good-bye, dear child."

Proserpina stood and watched her mother until she was out of sight; then went, singing, to the seashore. The sea nymphs heard the singing and brought her a necklace of seashells.

Proserpina thanked them and went into the fields to get some flowers to make wreaths for them. She picked many flowers, among them sweet roses and blue violets.

Suddenly she saw a large bush in front of her covered with wonderful flowers. Proserpina wished to take the bush home with her. She took hold of it with both hands and pulled and pulled. Soon she pulled it out by the roots; but where the bush had stood was a deep hole.

The hole grew larger and larger. Suddenly four black horses sprang out of it, drawing a golden chariot.

A man sat in the chariot with a crown on his head. His face was gloomy. His clothes were covered with diamonds.

Poor Proserpina was frightened, and screamed

for her mother. Then the man said: "Do not be frightened; I shall not harm you. I am King Pluto. I live in a beautiful castle. All the gold and silver and diamonds in the earth are mine."

Proserpina still cried for her mother, but Pluto took her and placed her in the chariot.

Pluto now urged on his horses. The chariot passed Ceres, who was working in a field. Proserpina cried for her mother. Ceres heard but could not see her.

The road grew darker and darker. At last they reached Pluto's castle. The walls were made of fine gold; the windows were made of crystal; the lamps were sparkling diamonds.

But Proserpina was very sad in Pluto's castle. She would eat nothing, for she knew that if she did, she could never see her mother again.

When Ceres heard her little girl cry out, she looked all around, but could not see her.

She went to the sea nymphs and asked for her child. They said, "She went into the fields." Then Ceres lighted a torch and searched for her.

The sun-god told her that Pluto had taken her away to his home.

Poor Ceres feared that she would never see her daughter again. She was so sad that she said she would not let the plants grow until Proserpina came back.

The plants did not grow, and the people were unhappy.

Mercury was now sent to Pluto. He said: "King Pluto, Ceres grieves for Proserpina. Will you let her go back to her mother?"

"I am sorry Proserpina must go," said Pluto. "But if her mother is so unhappy that she will not let the plants grow, you may take her."

Pluto's servant had given Proserpina a pomegranate. When she took it in her hand, she grew hungry. She took a bite and swallowed six seeds. Just then Mercury and Pluto came in.

Pluto told Proserpina she might go to her mother.

The little girl said good-bye to Pluto, and set out for home. When she came the grass

grew green, the flowers bloomed, and everything looked bright and happy.

Ceres was sitting on her doorsteps. She saw everything turning green. Looking up, she saw her child. Soon she had her in her arms. How happy they were!

Proserpina told her mother the whole story. Ceres became sad when she heard she had swallowed six seeds of the pomegranate.

"My dear child," she said, "you must stay one month with Pluto for every seed you have swallowed."

"I am not sorry," said Proserpina. "I like Pluto very much. He was very kind to me."

Now, let me tell you something about Ceres. In the spring, when everything becomes green, we say that Proserpina is visiting Ceres. In the fall, when everything is bare, Proserpina is leaving her mother. She is going to visit Pluto.

One flake and then another
And the deepest snow is laid.

SUMMER SUN

Great is the sun, and wide he goes,
Through empty heavens without repose;
And in the blue and glowing days
More thick than rain he showers his rays.

Though closer still the blinds we pull
To keep the shady parlor cool,
Yet he will find a chink or two
To slip his golden fingers through.

The dusty attic, spider clad,
He through the keyhole maketh glad;
And through the broken edge of tiles
Into the laddered hayloft smiles.

Meantime his golden face around
He bares to all the garden ground,
And sheds a warm and glittering look
. Among the ivy's inmost nook.

Above the hills, along the blue,
Round the bright air with footing true,
To please the child, to paint the rose,
The gardener of the world, he goes.

— ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

